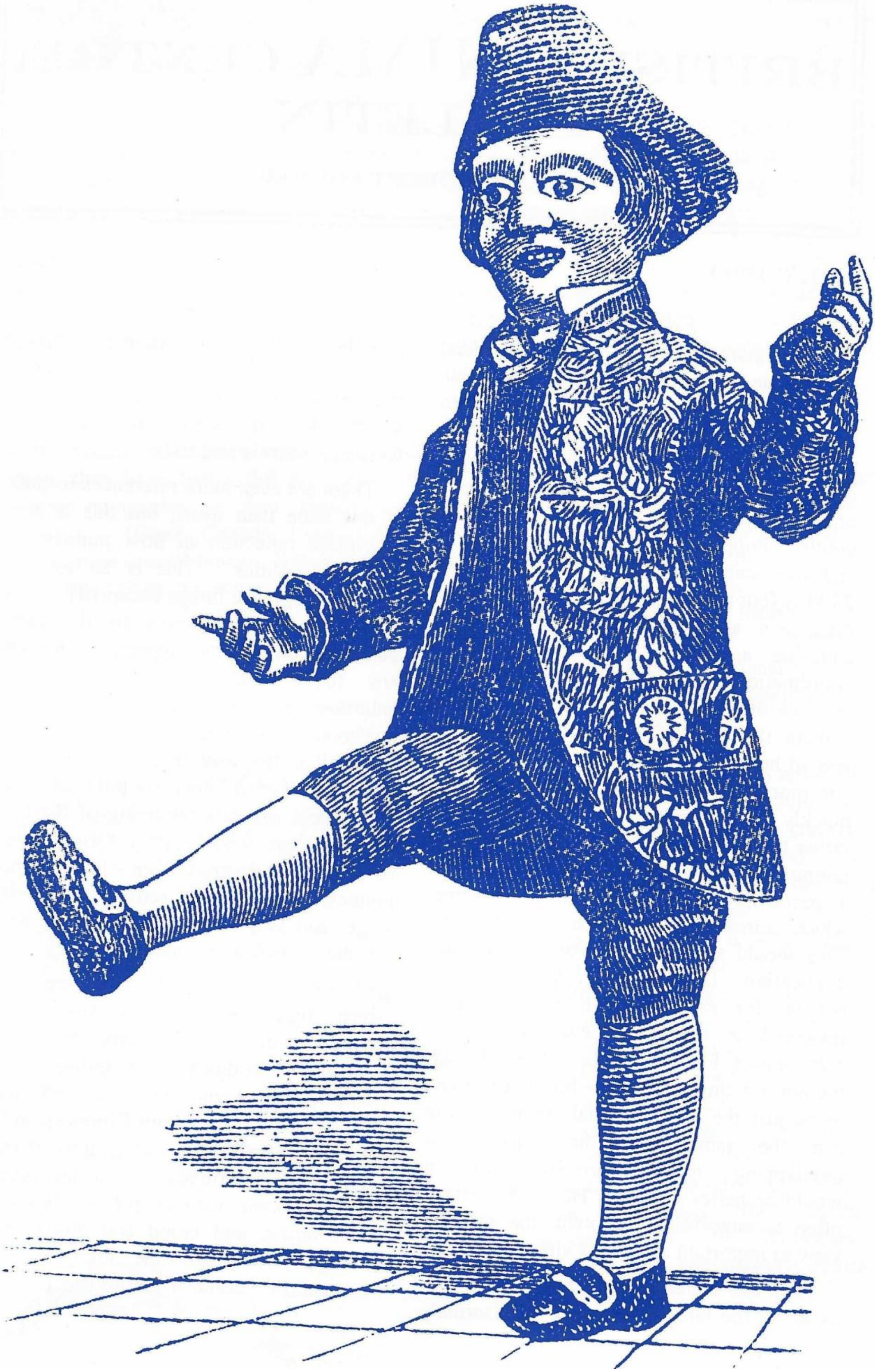
BrUNIMA Bulletin No 101 JULY 1999



BRITISH UNIMA CENTRE BULLETIN

EDITOR – ROBERT FOWLER

JULY 1999 NO 101

Editorial

Our chairman provides preliminary general information on the day-long, round-table event organized by puppetry organizations to see how we might refine our focus and work more effectively together, which, incidentally, proved to be a refutation – if one was needed – of the rather silly article entitled "Puppeteers call troubleshooter in to end war" carried in *The Sunday Telegraph* 23 May (but not in the London edition). The discussion among editors resulted in an amicable agreement to try to improve coordination. It is not that there has been any lack of willingness in this regard, but, by making the flow of information among us less ad hoc and more structured, we hope to get more information to puppeteers more quickly (announcing an upcoming attraction rather than – as is true too often – regretfully noting that it has already happened, which is a particular bugbear with this magazine, which comes out only three times a year). This should also help us avoid unnecessary duplication: there is clearly nothing wrong per se, for example, with a show being reviewed in several or even all of our publications, for that matter – it is, after all, the norm in the daily press – but, if it is going to be just the same material, approached in just the same way, then, given our overlapping memberships/readerships, it would be better avoided. However, form is often as important as content, the angle of view as important as what is viewed.

May this better cooperation at least help us avoid the fate of becoming a "disorderly periodical," which, according to UNIMA's *Le Courrier* (and I strongly suspect a translation problem here), the very worthwhile, if very irregularly-issued, Russian *Kukart* is said to be.

There are even more references to politics in this issue than usual, but this is not an inaccurate reflection of how puppetry *can* relate to politics. This is an aspect of puppetry (Spitting Image excepted) which is, of course, still unknown to the general public, which regards puppetry – if it gives it any thought at all – as purely an entertainment for children. And this confrontation with politics is not surprising – indeed it is the very reverse – for, without worrying whether "man is a political animal" is the most accurate rendering of the Greek phrase (some would prefer "social" here), circumstances do arise when – like it or not – politics, in the broadest sense, comes centre-stage, and you have *consciously* to decide whether to balk at or engage with it.

There are at least two current shows which may help redress the popular perception of what puppetry can handle. William Kentridge's Handspring Puppet Company has recently performed its mixed-media "Ubu and the Truth Commission." It has its funny moments, but its general mood is Stygian, its primary colour incarnadine. There is a scene, for example, where Pa Ubu is showering, and blood and bits of body parts are sluicing down the plughole. This is based on the testimony before the Truth and

Reconciliation Commission of a "perpetrator." He described how he would return home "stinking of blood and dynamite," having been disposing of bodies, and would shower to get rid of the stench. The problem was that his wife suspected him of having an affair and of showering to get rid of the smell of the other woman. It is a key scene, according to Kentridge himself, when Ma Ubu discovers – to her great relief – that Pa is only a murderer, and not an adulterer. That the amoral monster Ubu should represent the government torturer is indicative of Kentridge's grave disquiet at the unique, South African experiment of the Commission, a process which involves truth but not necessarily justice (it is certainly pertinent that Kentridge's father, Sidney, was counsel for Steve Biko; the testimony of the tormentors/murderers of the latter was given to an amnesty hearing of the TRC in September 1997). Hope members were able to get both to Kentridge's show at the Serpentine Gallery and the play at the Tricycle.

"Tinka's New Dress" by the Canadian marionettist Ronnie Burkett (at the Barbican until 10 July) is inspired by the puppetry performances in wartime Czechoslovakia known as "daisies" because of that tiny flower's tenacity in forcing its way up, even through concrete, to the light. In a profile of Burkett and his show in *The Guardian* it was said that "More than 100 Czech puppeteers died under torture or in the camps during the Nazi occupation." Now, I imagine not all of them will have died for reasons directly related to puppetry, but the stand taken by puppeteers in that country is a matter of record. Skupa is the best-known example. He toured shows like *Merry-Go-Round on Three Floors* (written by Jan Malík under the pseudonym of Jiří Kubeš), which satirized Hitler in the person of Mrs Drbálková (Mrs Gossip), but eventually the Germans read between the lines and Skupa was arrested, in January 1944, and was in prison in Dresden during the fire storm (Spejbl and Hurvínek were locked up in a Gestapo filing cabinet). But others too were imprisoned or killed for what they did and/or who they were. And it is also worth bearing in mind that Czech and Slovak were not the only languages of puppet theatre in the republic. Anni Schultz, director of the Zwirn-Züpf Truppe in Prague, died in Auschwitz. (Puppetry performances took place in both Terezín and Ravensbrück.) Dr Paul Löwy, who ran the Hölzerne Truppe, in Karlovy Vary, was fortunate enough to escape. The fate of the members of the two Hebrew companies (one in Brno, the other in Mukačevo – now the Ukrainian side of the border) may be guessed at. But the tradition of resistance in the land of Havel, Palach, and Švejk – with their very different modi operandi – goes back a long way. The plaque erected to Kašpárek (the Czech "Punch") in the municipal hall in Pilsen in 1928 reads "Kašpárek helped destroy the Austro-Hungarian empire." And for that reason was removed by the Nazis, albeit later restored. One of my favourite 19th-century Czech puppeteers is Jan Nepomuk Lašťovka – baker, acrobat, strongman, showman, innovative puppeteer, and patriot. In the wake of the disappointment of the Year of Revolutions, 1848, he created three patriotic plays set in the glorious times of Jan Hus. His shows would end with an old man and woman singing rhyming couplets about

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contemporary political events. He was not afraid to enter into direct conflict with the local Austrian authorities either. He refused to perform for Austrian army officers, and the story goes that after one request to do so – and Lašťovka spoke fluent German – he replied: "Yes, commander, I speak German, but my actors do not."

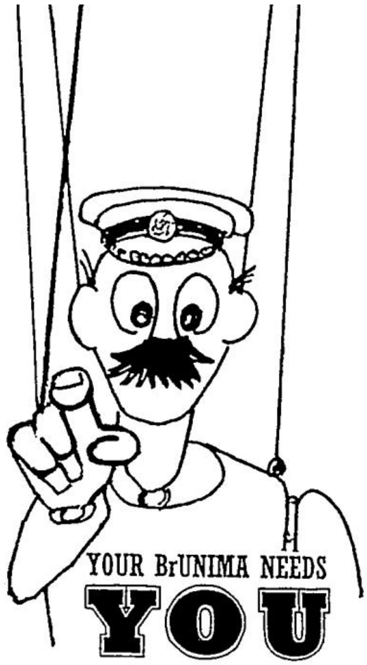
Manchester's Streets Ahead free festival saw the British premiere of Amoros et Augustin's rhythmic, ritualistic "Mutiny on the Bounty," Blackpool's Puppet Up! featured the Compagnie Philippe Genty in "Dédale" that same month (a review will appear in the next *Animations*), and the City of London Festival offered Bulgarian (Theatre Perpetuum Mobile) and Venezuelan (Teatro Naku) puppet companies in June. Reviews of such for this publication would be welcome. There is little inducement we can offer, but the price of entry to an event is within our budget.

Non-Ex Cathedra Remarks

Ray DaSilva

Last time, I mentioned that this is election year for BrUNIMA and that we seek new members for the BrUNIMA Committee. Given our diverse membership, it would be desirable to get a good cross-section: amateurs, professionals, researchers, enthusiasts – of any age or background. So, no matter what category you fit into, please consider standing for election. It will be taken as read that you are already interested in the global aspects of puppetry, the only prerequisite being that you are willing to attend meetings about five times a year to help plan events and steer the organisation. If you would like to have a share of the action don't wait to be asked: contact me or any of the officers listed on the back page of this *Bulletin*. Alternatively, if you would like to suggest someone else, please do.

According to our revised Constitution, no one may serve as an officer for more than two consecutive terms, which means that I shall no longer be eligible to take office next year; so you may expect a new look to the organisation. We shall also be seeking to elect three Councillors to represent BrUNIMA on the UNIMA International Council. These are usually members of the BrUNIMA Committee, but do not have to be.



The editorial has already referred to the round-table meeting of puppetry organizations. Prior to that meeting, in consultation with the BrUNIMA Committee, I prepared a sort of manifesto in which we set out our stall, looking at the British situation not from our own exclusive standpoint but seeking to do so from the viewpoint of all the people the organizations jointly serve. People who seek information on a variety of topics, the chance to meet one another, recognition and support, opportunities for performance, advocacy for puppetry, and a space for reflection on their work.

In Britain we have no fewer than five national organizations serving these needs, whereas in many countries the UNIMA Centre is the main or only organisation. The reasons for our local situation are mostly historical, but having several organisations has caused territorial problems in the past.

In the last two years, however, there has been a new accord, because the current officers of the different organisations all get along well together. Now that we have the right "chemistry," we have the opportunity to look at ways in which we can all share in serving the best interests of the puppetry community.

In signposting a way forward, we pointed out that our community needs all these organizations only if they complement one another, ie offer different services, with none of them trying to be too broad, being all things to everybody. An alternative would be to reduce the number by amalgamation. The BrUNIMA Committee believes that the first option is preferable, ie with the organisations – each with a distinct, sharp focus – working interdependently for the best interests of puppeteers, because this will provide a stronger voice for the advocacy of puppetry to the public, grant-giving bodies, and so forth.

Each group needs to consider the best way to support the others and what it would be best to relinquish to them because they do it better.

For most members of the organizations, the journals and newsletters are the principal reason for belonging. To them, the main difference between the organizations is the type of information in their publications and how it is presented. It is therefore crucial to ensure that the publications accurately reflect the respective foci of their organisations and that the editors create a common understanding of what type of information they each publish and what they lay aside and pass on to the others. BrUNIMA's main concern is with international matters. We hope that the other organizations will recognise that BrUNIMA is their link to the international community, and consider how they can best support it.

BrUNIMA, for it's part, offers support to all the other organisations. This will be more easily effected as soon as their aims and policies are defined and interrelated. In particular, BrUNIMA will make sure that information received from national and international sources which is particularly pertinent to them is passed on quickly. BrUNIMA will cooperate with all the other organisations in joint projects by providing international perspectives.

Everyone thought that it was a very constructive day and agreed that we should meet again before the end of the year. The following brief joint statement was produced by the participants.

PUPPETEERS PLAN FOR THE MILLENNIUM AND BEYOND

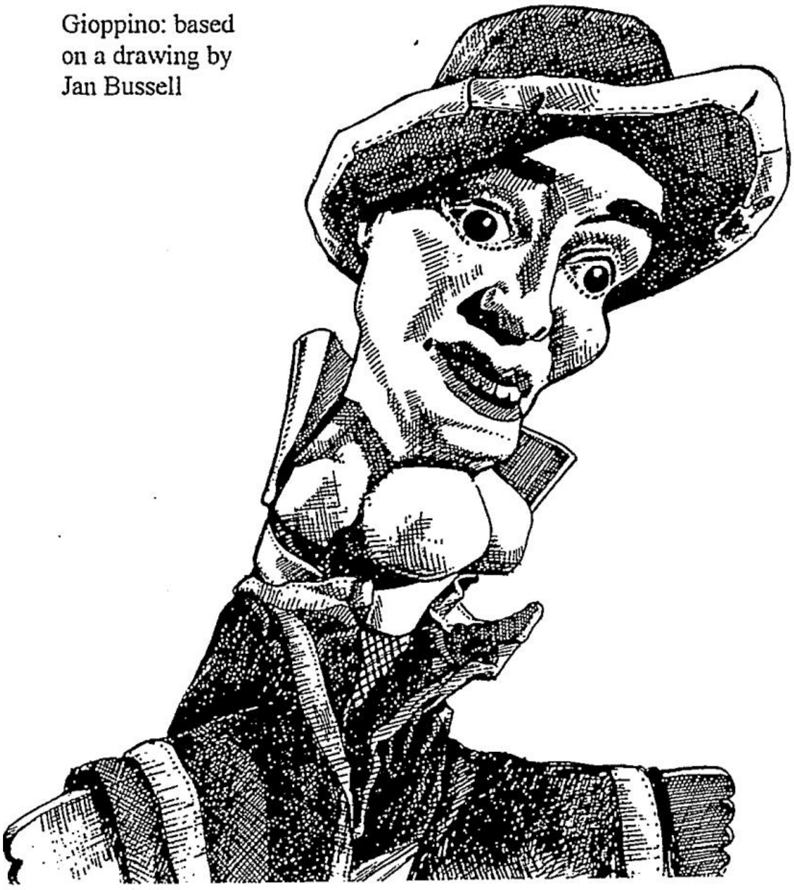
In a unique meeting held in St Albans on 23rd June representatives from four major UK puppetry organisations met and reached agreement on identifying suggested areas of future cooperation.

In an age where there is keen competition for external funding, there was unanimous agreement on the benefit of a unified approach to developing such ideas as the establishment of a permanent museum and performance space and related educational initiatives. These proposals will now be taken back to the membership of the respective organisations for consideration and feedback prior to a further meeting, planned for later in the year, to advance these ideas.

Pulcinella Does Not Stand Alone

The following article by George Speaight is "from a history of European puppet heroes that has now been abandoned, as I consider McCormick and Pratasik's book [*Popular Puppet Theatre in Europe, 1800-1914*] a very adequate alternative." The introduction to the abandoned study, "The Voice of the People," can be found in *The Puppetry Yearbook*, Vol I (1995).

Italy was a relatively late starter as far as nation statehood is concerned. Mr Speaight writes of "distinct regional puppet heroes, who spoke for the local population" "in the dialects of the local population." I was reading the historian Peter Burke's *The Art of Conversation* recently and think the following quotation from it well illustrates the diversity of the country, as reflected on the linguistic plane: "regional dialect [was]... the first and probably the only language of the majority of the population. As late as 1860, when Italy was officially united, it is probable that only 3 percent of the population understood Italian [by which, I imagine, he means the Florentine 'dialect'], let alone spoke it."



Gioppino: based on a drawing by Jan Bussell

Nineteenth-Century Puppet Heroes of Northern Italy

George Speaight

The situation of popular puppets in Italy began to change by the end of the 18th century. Pulcinella still attracted the public in southern Italy and Rome, and Arlecchino remained a popular character in the North, but a very interesting development now took place. All over northern Italy – in Milan, Turin, Bologna, Venice, and elsewhere – new characters appeared who became identified with the areas in which they had first developed, and spoke indeed, not just in the dialects of the local population, but as their representatives.

What was the origin of this development, which was matched in France and in central Europe? I suggest that it was associated with the spirit of the French Revolution, which spoke to working-class populations everywhere, telling them that they were no longer slaves of the social system but could speak for themselves. In Britain the first stirrings of this spirit were swamped in the national fervour of the Napoleonic War, but we must remember that Bonaparte was not, originally, regarded as a tyrant in the countries he occupied, but as a liberator. And, above all, Italy consisted of a number of separate little states, ruled often by foreigners like Austria in the north and Spain in the south. And it was above all in Italy that this regional character expressed itself in the creation of distinct regional puppet heroes, who spoke for the local population.

There were many of these regional heroes, but I will content myself with describing some half dozen of them.

Gioppino of Bergamo

Gioppino, which is a corruption of Giusoppino, appeared in the mountains of northern Italy in the early decades of the 19th century and was based on the city of Bergamo. He and all the members of his family can easily be recognized by three huge goitres bulging from their necks. These goitres, which are enlargements of the thyroid gland, were caused by a lack of iodine in the diet and were prevalent in the inhabitants of the Alps. There are illustrations of them from earlier centuries, and they were finally dealt with by the addition of sodium iodide to the table salt in the 19th century.

Gioppino, who was always a glove puppet, is a typical villager of the Alps, who often suffers from the tricks practised upon him by better educated citizens of the plains, but in the end his robust common sense, partnered by his natural peasant astuteness, aided by his use of the stick, gives him the victory. He was occasionally transported as far as Milan by the mountain puppet showmen, and they did not hesitate to introduce him into plays set in different parts of Italy when they thought it appropriate. A good example of this is the play called *The Revolution in Palermo*, which can be briefly described as follows.

Gioppino is a porter in a gang of dockside labourers at Palermo, whose leader is called Cosimo. A policeman is found murdered, and the Commissario of Police, wishing to arrest somebody for the crime, arrests Cosimo without any evidence.

Cosimo's mother, Teresa, and his girl friend, Rosina, visit the Commissario to plead for Cosimo's release, but the policeman refuses to see Teresa, and tries to make love to Rosina. She spits in his face. The policeman then orders the execution of Cosimo.

When the women report this to the gang of porters, Gioppino decides to visit the Commissario himself, and pleads for Cosimo's life. But the Commissario rejects Gioppino, and signs Cosimo's death warrant. Gioppino throws himself on the Commissario, and is only dragged off by the police.

Gioppino reports all this to a meeting of the population of Palermo, which is roused to fury. A monk hands out arms to the people. Gioppino and Rosina head a revolution, which storms the headquarters of the police, and kills the tyrant Commissario. The decapitated head of the murdered Cosimo is discovered, and a flag – the tricolour – is raised. Garibaldi, who has just landed in Sicily (1860) to lead a campaign for Italian unity, joins the revolt, and the movement for Italian unity is under way.

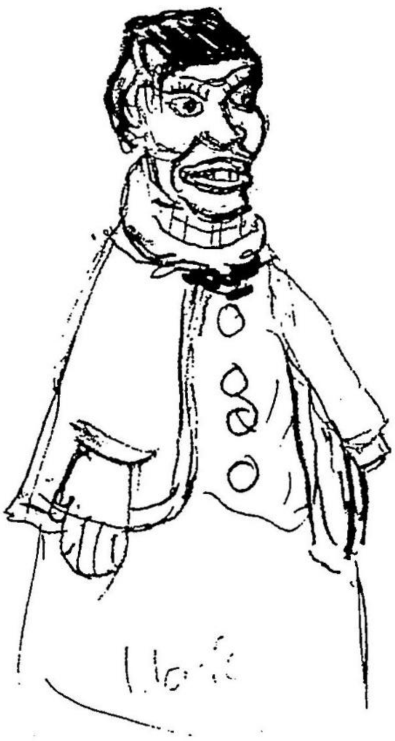
I find it very moving that the instincts of these humble players of the Alps led them to link their local hero, with his almost incomprehensible dialect, with the beginnings of the movement for Italian unification. It raises the local problems of their district to the national level.

I do not think that any theatres play Gioppino today, but I am assured that his spirit is still alive in the citizens of Bergamo.

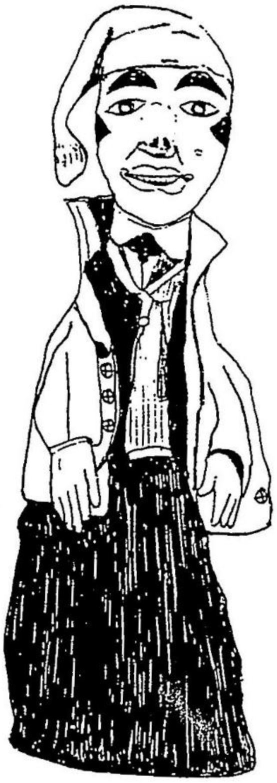
Faggiolino and Sandrone of Bologna

Bologna has enjoyed a strong tradition of puppet theatre, and sometime in the early 19th century a puppeteer called Cavalazzi had a booth in the Corte dei Gallazzi, where he conceived a character based upon the ragamuffins of Bologna, the *biricchein* in the local dialect, who passed their time in squatting by the roadside, passing rude remarks about the respectable citizens. They were not pickpockets, but basically honest at heart, and merry little rogues. Cavalazzi gave the puppet the name of Faggiolino. He can be recognized by the mole on his cheek; he is ruddy and smiling, wears rather ragged clothes, is often in shirt sleeves, but occasionally sports an embroidered waistcoat. Loose locks of black hair fall over his forehead. He carries and uses the traditional stick of the glove puppet. Corrado Ricci gave a good description of him in 1918. "Faggiolino, the favourite mask, the Benjamin among burattini, represents at all times the simple force which rebels against the haughty and the unjust. He is the small man who is to be found where there is some lowly individual to be defended and some strong one to be suppressed. He is always laughing, and makes jokes of everything, from the pomp of the Chief Constable to the proclamations of the Prefecture. As all the psalms end in the Gloria, so do all the quarrels of Faggiolino end in cudgelings. He always has a knobbly stick with which he beats doctors and peasants, emperors and porters. Faggiolino has remained the hero of the public puppet-booth, the symbol of the Bolognese *biricchein.*"

In 1831 another puppeteer, named Filippo Cuccoli, set up a booth in Bologna outside the Palazzo del Podesta, but when he found that the public still favoured Faggiolino on



Sandrone: sketch by Mary Speaight



Faggiolino: sketch by John Morley

the Corte dei Gallazzi, he introduced a character called Sandrone, who had originally been developed in the town of Modena, not far away. Sandrone was an elderly peasant, with a big, ruddy face, a loud voice, and only a few teeth in his mouth, who liked to drink red wine. He was ignorant but full of good sense and cunning. His wife was timid and faithful, and there was a son who had run away from school and was a cunning trickster.

Faggiolino and Sandrone battled it out between them – sometimes in partnership –and were joined by a number of other characters, of whom the chief was Dottore Balanzone, one of the few characters that the puppet theatres took over from the *commedia dell'arte*. The Dottore wore a black half-mask, had a black moustache, and dressed in black clothes; he was a pedant, much given to long rambling speeches. Here is an example: "Did you see that I tripped, and tripping might have fallen: if I had fallen, I should have hurt myself; if I had hurt myself, I should have to go to bed; if I had gone to bed, the doctor would have come; if the doctor had come, he would have ordered me medicine; medicine is composed from drugs; drugs come from the East; from the East come the winds, according to Aristotle; Aristotle was the master of Alexander the Great; Alexander was master of the world; the world was supported by Atlas; if Atlas supported the world he would have had great strength...." And so on *ad infinitum*.

These characters always remained glove puppets, and between them a vast repertory of plays was built up. Manuscript texts of many of these plays are preserved in the Civic Library of Bologna, and an Italian scholar has analysed their origins as follows:

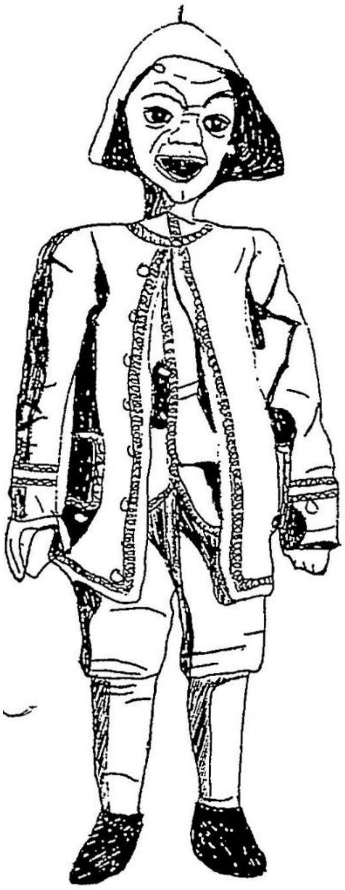
based on 18th-century works	50
based on operas or operettas	23
based on legend or mythology	21
based on patriotic themes	10
based on cloak and sword	10
based on social situations	9
based on famous brigands	8
based on the works of Goldoni	7
based on historical characters	6
based on Bolognese legends	6
based on anticlerical themes	6
based on biblical themes	5
based on judicial errors	3
based on themes of chivalry	3

The puppet theatres held the attention of the Bolognese public till the arrival of the cinema, but I do not think they survive now.

Gerolamo of Milan

At the end of the 18th century there was a very brilliant glove-puppeteer in Genoa called Gian Battista Sales, who "invented" a character called Girone. It is not really true to write that any puppeteer invented any of these characters. What happened was a process of creation in which the puppeteer sensed the aspirations of his audience, and a character evolved in his mind who responded to the unspoken instincts of his spectators. So it was that the character of Girone was carried both to Milan and to Turin.

In Milan Girone was renamed Gerolamo, who usurped the position that Arlecchino had previously occupied in the puppet booths. It was a process that was occurring all over northern Italy; the half-masked, gaudily-dressed characters from the *commedia dell'arte* were supplanted by characters of the people, looking like the people, and dressed like the people. In Milan this transformation took place in the theatre of a puppet player called Giuseppe Fiando, who also, and fundamentally, changed him from a glove puppet into a marionette. This is said to have taken place in the year 1815, in a play called *Il mostro turchino* (The Turkish Monster). Gerolamo retained his petit-bourgeois costume and appearance (but



often with a mole on his cheek), and his Piedmontese accent, which the Milanese public found very entertaining.

Such was the popularity of Gerolamo that the Teatro Fiando changed its name to the Teatro Gerolamo, finally occupying a site almost next door to the great opera house in 1869, which led to it being known as the "piccola Scala." The theatre acquired a wide fame, sending productions to London in 1888, but Gerolamo himself came to play a smaller part in them. They came to rely more upon ballets, operas and military spectacles.

The Teatro Gerolamo remained open until 1957, but in the 1980s the company was revived for a major tour of Europe. Still directed by the Colla family, it came to England in 1985, where it presented some visually brilliant reconstructions of 19th-century productions, but Gerolamo did not appear in them. This smartly-dressed character, standing for the victory of justice over injustice; of good over evil, ingenuity over intrigue; this cheerful, frank, unconstrained master of the scene and the public, with the fine humour of a great interpreter, no longer had a role to play.

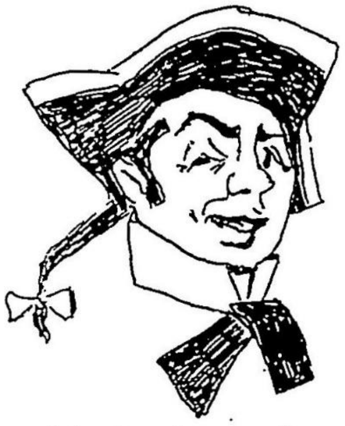
Gianduja of Turin

When Gerolamo went to Milan, he was also carried at about the same time to Turin, where his master hoped to find fortune. He is said to have arrived in 1808. For his opening production, Giovanni Sales chose a play called *Artabano, the Tyrant of the World*, which was approved by the local police. But when it was placarded round the town with the additional subtitle "with Gerolamo, confidant and king combined," the local police suspected that it was a dig intended for Gerolamo Bonaparte, brother of the great Napoleon, who had recently been crowned king of Westphalia. The play was forbidden, the theatre was closed, and Sales was out of work.

However, in a few years' time Napoleon had fallen and Sales could work again, but for safety's sake he had changed the name of his chief character to Gianduja. This was simply Gerolamo under a slightly different name, and with this character Sales continued to divert the people of Turin. In the 1850s, however, a new puppeteer entered the scene, Luigi Lupi, who followed the example of Milan, and it is said in 1848, converted Gianduja into a marionette. This change, in both Milan and Turin, was a reversal of what was happening elsewhere at that time in Europe – Italy, France, England.... – where marionettes had been changed to glove puppets. Now clothed in a maroon jacket, a yellow waistcoat, red stockings, and black wig, Gianduja became the darling of the local people. His large eyes, beneath arched and heavy eyebrows, his flat nose, thick lips, fat chin and fleshy cheeks, always with a mole upon them, presented a mixture of coarseness and cunning.

After the death of Sales, the Lupi brothers had the stage to themselves. E De Amicis described their theatre as follows: "But it is always Gianduja who produces the greatest effect. Sometimes there are bursts of convulsive merriment, choruses of gurgles and trills, peaks of laughter, shrill, musical, prolonged.... You will ask of what his repertory consists. That is a question that dismays one. To reply to it I might write a whole volume. It is a repertory which, between dramas, comedies, farces, reviews, ballets and fantasies, embraces the universe of time and space; which extends from the Flood to the siege of Makalle; comprises mythology, national history and the city news; stretches from China to California, from California to Greenland, from the

Gerolamo: sketch by John Morley



spaces of air to the abysses of ocean, from the circles of Paradise to the caverns of Hell.... The theatre of the Lupis has reflected the whole of our new national life. Gianduja risked prison when speech was not free, defied the police, pre-recognised the revolution, glorified the martyrs, and celebrated the victories."

The Lupi repertoire extended to more than 800 pieces, and the De Amicis' roll call reminds us of the list of plays performed by Faggiolino and Sandrone in Bologna. There is indeed, an enormous repertory of marionette plays that was performed by the marionettes of Italy in the 19th century. Many of these have been preserved in manuscript in local libraries, but only a few have been printed, and even when printed copies can be found it is difficult to bring the plays to life for English or American readers, especially the scenes involving the comic heroes. They are invariably written in dialect, which is untranslatable, and if rendered into modern English are far from funny. We have to take on trust the report of the laughter provoked by Gianduja: "Oh that silvery laughter, that fresh blessed laughter, the sweetest music of the earth, that laughter which brings back our childhood to us, and calls up the face of our young mothers, that laughter which speaks of innocence and hope, ignorance of life and joy in living; which diffuses itself in the souls around like a fruitful and consoling power that is blessed by those who laugh it, and those who call it forth."

All that is very well, but it doesn't really tell us what the plays were like. So here are a few replies that Gianduja gave under examination to the president of a law court, which may offer some flavour of his character:

President: What is your name?

Gianduja: Gianduja Stupone, son of Signor Popolo and of Signora Communità.

President: What's that? Is your father called Popolo?

Gianduja: Yes, sir, Signor Popolo.... because my mother didn't marry anyone.

President: Leave these useless jokes. How old are you?

Gianduja: Thirty-seven years, three months, twenty minutes, and 160 seconds.

President: What is your occupation?

Gianduja: Innkeeper, and I try to cheat as much as possible.

President: Are you an Italian?

Gianduja: Yes, sir, Piedmontese.

President: How many years have you been at Lione?

Gianduja: Five years.

President: And from which place do you come?

Gianduja: From Turin.

President: Do you know the accused?

Gianduja: I met him in my inn, that fool came to have a glass of wine in my hotel. I had never seen him before, but since from his accent I had noticed that he was one from my area....

President: You mean, a fellow-countryman.

Gianduja: It's the same thing. Anyway I wanted to give him something to drink, and then I noticed that he didn't have his pumpkin head screwed on properly, because he said that they made cows (*vaccate*) out of flowers.

President: You mean arches (*arcate*).

Gianduja: It's the same thing. Didn't I say that you were all mad.

President: And did you understand him to say that he wanted to kill the President?

Gianduja: No, sir.

President: Think carefully. Are you certain you are not lying?

Gianduja: Mr President, if I tell a lie the person in my presence explodes.

President: Very well, you may withdraw.

Gianduja: But first let me pay for my loaf and litre.

President: I said, withdraw.

Gianduja: Ah, I'll go right now.... Crikey, what haste!

Facanapa of Venice

There seems to be no doubt about the origin of this character. He was created by a fine puppet player, Antonio Reccardini, it is believed in 1828. His area was the Udine, based on Venice but including Padua, Verona and Trieste. He was at first only a marionette, smaller than the other puppets, with a white and red face, a black tricorn hat, a tailed jacket, and a jolly red waistcoat. He was a lively character, always on the move, perpetually agitating his head, his legs and his arms. His voice was rather loud, and he spoke in jerks, pronouncing each word carefully as if, a contemporary wrote, "like the tinkle of a pearl in a metal plate."

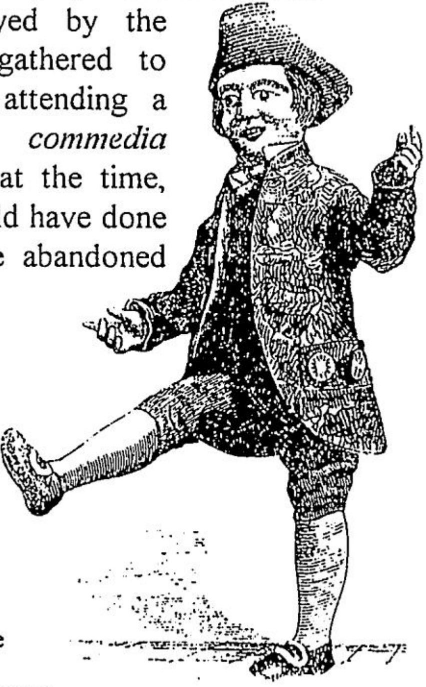
The roles that he played included notary, lackey, husband without a wife, innkeeper, lazy servant, gaoler, master of ceremonies, squire, professor of Latin, and fanatic for buying lottery tickets (with which he occasionally won). In other words, he could be widely cast in a whole range of subservient roles. He was a townsman, not a peasant, and his morals were without reproach.

He was almost always partnered by Arlecchino in the plays that Reccardini devised, with titles like *The Lost Purse, or Arlecchino the Fortunate Beggar and Facanapa the Cook*, or *The Justice and Clemency of Frederick II, King of Prussia, With Arlecchino a Pretended Blind Man and Facanapa a Gentlemanly Thief.* It was clearly a double act that was enormously popular with his public, and Reccardini kept his theatre going from 1828 to 1876. He was succeeded by his son, Leone, until 1914. Antonio's obituary took up columns in the local papers, and he was above all remembered as the creator of Facanapa. Journalists wrote about Facanapa as "a character more kind, more graceful, more simpatico than any other marionette, loved by youth and the delight of children.... The smiling, lively, coquettish, elegant Facanapa, who set the young clapping their hands by putting no more than a fifth of his pretty little face before the curtain." Jonathan Swift had written in 1728 of how:

If Punch, to stir their fancy, shows
In at the door his monstrous nose,
Then sudden draws it back again;
Oh what a pleasure mixed with pain.

But what a contrast between the boisterous old red nose of the 18th century and the smiling elegant of 100 years later!

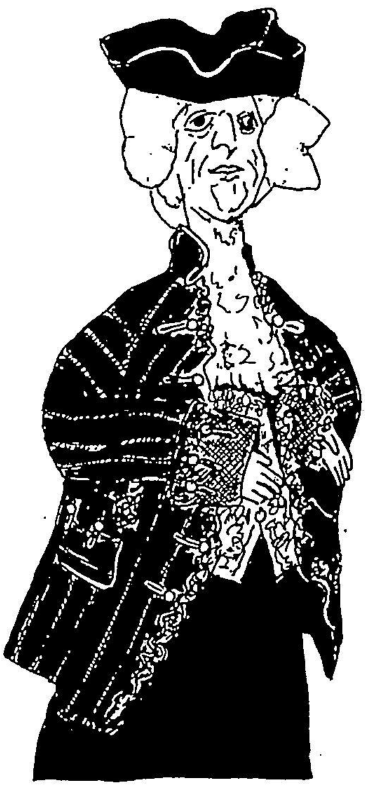
Some other puppeteers introduced their own Facanapas, which is my definition of qualification as puppet heroes, and in the early 1900s Renzo Salici developed him as a glove puppet. I was fortunate enough to witness one of these performances on the sand of the Lido in 1957. I was not at that time planning to write about the puppets, so I did not note the content in detail, but I remember a very lively performance, that was certainly enjoyed by the small crowd that gathered to watch it. I was attending a conference on the *commedia dell'arte* in Venice at the time, and I felt that it would have done us all good to have abandoned the lecture hall to watch a bit of real *commedia dell'arte*. A famous scene in Salici's show was that in which Facanapa cooked a true, smoking,



Facanapa: from a Veronese exhibition catalogue, *fra Marionette e Burattini* 1983 polentina on the stage of his booth. Renzo Salici retired in 1974 and I do not know of anyone who has succeeded him.

Cassandrino of Rome

This is a different kind of character, which does not quite fit into our cast list; but it would be a pity to leave him out. Rome, it must be remembered, was the centre of the Papal State, governed by elderly clerics, until 1870. This attracted a large number of monsignori, capable in the ways of the world, but – in some cases – too easily the victim of attractive women. One such was Cassandrino, about whom a jeweller of the same name wrote a number of plays from about 1826. It would have attracted the censure of the authorities if he had been presented as in holy orders, but the puppet Cassandrino – 55 to 60 years of age, agile, alert, white haired and white powdered – cannot have failed to have appeared in the imagination of the audience as if wearing the skullcap of a cardinal, or at least the purple stockings of a monsignor.



Here is one of the plays in which Cassandrino appeared as a marionette. It was called *Cassandrino, a Student of Painting*.

A painter in Rome had a number of students, and a very pretty sister. Cassandrino is introduced into their circle, and immediately falls in love with the sister. He dares not express his emotions publicly, but offers a cantata by Paisiello, that he had heard at a concert. It is sung charmingly by the daughter of a cobbler. This scene is interrupted by the brother of the beauty, who reprimands his sister for giving encouragement to this elderly suitor.

In the next act the elderly suitor dresses like a student, and blackens his hair (but forgets the bit over his ears). He appears to be making some progress, when they are interrupted by the aunt of the sister – a woman with whom Cassandrino had, in years past, enjoyed a flirtation. He hides in the studio, but the sister's brother forces him to agree to marry the aunt. Cassandrino, who fears to make a scene, agrees. They stand ready for the curtain call, but Cassandrino "whispers" to the audience: "I may appear to have renounced my object, but I am becoming the uncle of the object that I adore!"

The death of the human Cassandrino, who had written some five or six similar pieces, brought an end to this run of successes. After 1841 Pulcinella reclaimed his historic role at the Teatro Fiano in Venice. But the character of Cassandrino had entered Roman folklore. Here is another play with a very different conclusion, as recorded by Yorick.

Cassandrino looks to repair his fading fortune by marrying Camilla, a young girl from Albano. The journey there was full of incident as he travelled on a donkey, and in an inn near his destination he was persuaded to drink heavily with a group of companions. On leaving the inn he remounted the donkey with difficulty, but the animal collapsed and died under him, throwing him on to the road. Here his head struck a stone, and he passed out. By chance Camilla and her parents passed that way, and seeing him lying apparently dead, they noted how old and ugly he looked and they congratulated themselves on escaping from such an unsuitable match, but regretted that Camilla had just lost what they believed was his sizable fortune. "Why not persuade a notary to record the marriage that would have taken place so soon?" – they asked each other. An obliging notary was found. But Cassandrino had meanwhile recovered consciousness, and was quietly listening to everything they said. When the moment came for the notary to sign the document, Cassandrino cried out in a loud and terrible voice: "No, give it to me, I will sign it." This produced general consternation, but the contract was signed, the dowry was paid, and Cassandrino carried off his young wife to his own home on a donkey.

Bibliography

The only book that provides a study of all the puppets treated here is Roberto Leydi and Renata Mezzanotte Leydi's *Marionette e Burattini*, Milan, 1958. The catalogue of an exhibition *Burattini, Marionette, Pupi*, held in the Palazzo Reale of Milan in 1980 offers a large number of illustrations of most of the characters here treated.

In recent years there has been a burst of interest in these regional puppets, and a number of well-illustrated books have been published, including:

Pino Capelli, *Baracca e Burattini*, 1977, on the puppets of Bergamo.

Alessandro Cervellati, *Fagiolino e gli altri*, 1964, on the puppets of Bologna.

Renato Berganzini and others, *Burattini e Burattinai*, 1980, on the puppets of Modena.

Marco Apollonio and others, *Storia e Arte della Compagnia Carlo Colla e Figli*, 1961, on the puppets of Milan.

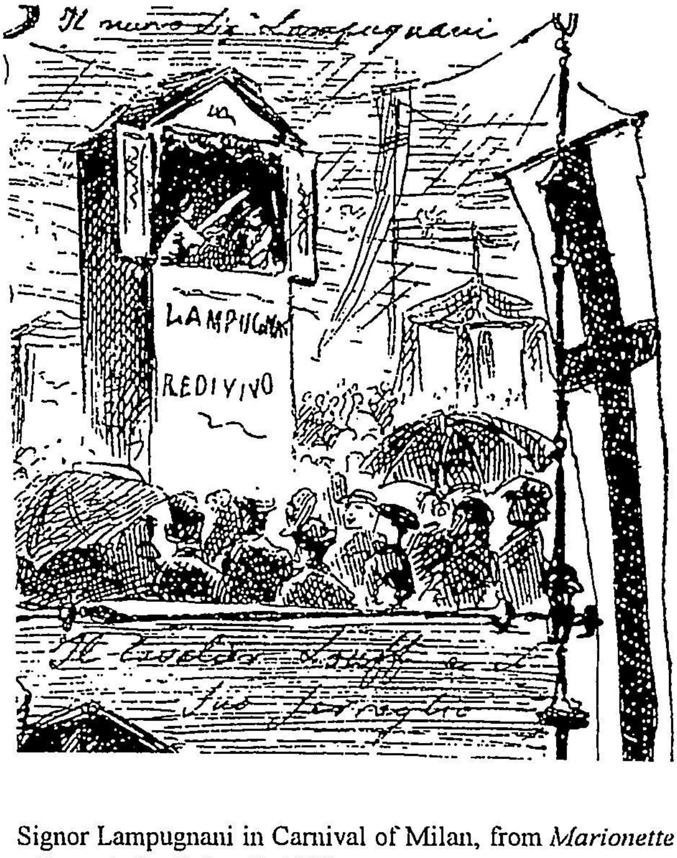
Gian Mesturino, *Il Museo della Marionetta di Torino*, 1989, on the puppets of Turin, with text in Italian and English.

Giancarlo Pretini, *Facanapa e gli altri*, 1985, on the puppets of Venice.

Earlier works are Yorick (Pietro Ferrigni), *La Storia dei Burattini*, 1902, and Antonio Barberi, *Burattini e Burattinai Bolognese*, 1928. Anyone wishing to study the story of the Italian marionettes in greater detail should turn to *Burattini e Marionette in Italia dal Cinquecento ai Giorni Nostri*, Roma, 1980.

The quotations from Corrado Ricci on "The Burattini of Bologna," from E De Amicis on "The Marionettes of Torino" and on "Roman Marionettes," and from E Jal on "Marionettes at Milano" all come from *The Marionnette*, edited by Gordon Craig, Florence, 1918, Nos 1, 8, 9, and 12.

The figures, scenery and documents of a number of North Italian 18- and 19th-century marionette theatres have been preserved in museums. Among these are the Venetian theatre in the Museo Civico Museo Correr (Ca' Rezzonico) in Venice; the 18th-century theatre in the Museum of Childhood (Victoria and Albert Museum) at Bethnal Green, London; the theatre once belonging to the Borromeo family, in the villa on the Isola Madre in Lake Maggiore; the Lupi theatre from Turin in the Museo della Marionetta, via S. Teresa, Turin; and the Museo Teatrino Rissone from Milan in the Civico Museo dell' Attore in Genoa (though I remember visiting this near Cervia, south of Ravenna).



Signor Lampugnani in Carnival of Milan, from *Marionette e Burattini* by R Leydi, 1958.

Russia/Georgia

Kukly

In a Moscow dispatch in *The Guardian* (3 4 99) James Meek dissects the scandal surrounding Russian Prosecutor General Yuriy Skuratov. Basically, Skuratov claims to have (and probably does have) compromising material, mainly financial, on a host of politicians and officials, including Yeltsin and family (The Family includes his two daughters and their husbands). Yeltsin tried to sack Skuratov, the legislature refused to endorse his action. A secretly-filmed video of the country's chief law officer in bed with two prostitutes, who were in the pay of a businessman he was investigating, then surfaced and was eventually broadcast on national television. Meeks writes: "In a recent edition of Kukly, the Russian Spitting Image, a confused old Yeltsin in a jumper meets a smarter, more energetic version of himself and asks 'Who are you?'

'I'm a man who resembles the president,' the other replies.

'Then who am I?'

'You're a man who doesn't.'"

This prompted me to search out the episode. "Based on nonsecret material," it parodies the "X Files," including the theme tune, the subject of inquiry being not UFOs but USOs (Unidentified Sexual Objects). Two investigators are viewing a video. You never actually see for yourself what is happening on it, although you hear lots of moaning as well as the investigators' deadpan description of the bedroom antics of "a man who resembles the prosecutor general." The "man who resembles the president" scene, by the way, occurs at "a place which resembles Barvikha [Yeltsin's sanatorium retreat]." Another locale "resembles the Federation Council [the upper chamber of parliament]."

A lot is packed into 10 minutes, and the episodes are as much a verbal as a visual treat – if not more so. The dramatis personae – the political and business élite – and the subject matter are not so difficult to make out, but the language, which may, for example, depending on subject matter, be couched in verse imitative of the *bylina* (traditional heroic poem), be full of mock Church Slavonic (archaic high style), or be highly colloquial, is not easy to follow. A team of writers is employed, and one of the best is Viktor Shenderovich. If you want an excellent, entertaining account of the ups and downs of *Kukly* (including attempts to ban the programme) from the time Grigoriy Gorin launched it, I would direct you to Shenderovich's article "Kukliady" (The Kukly Epic), which appeared in the literary magazine *Znamya*, 3/98, pp 169-188. Shenderovich was the author of another *Kukly* episode, "Treasure Island," which was briefly mentioned by the BBC's Moscow correspondent Rob Parsons on the early-morning Radio 4 news programme (19 5 99). This was in fact the previous Sunday's broadcast. Based on Robert Louis Stevenson's story, it has a motley crew of politicians – Luzhkov, Seleznev, Zhirinovskiy, Primakov, Yavlinskiy, Zyuganov... – in search of treasure. They are recognizable not just in terms of their appearance but by virtue of their very nicely captured mores and mannerisms. The talk is all of impeachment, but the tables are turned when Yeltsin's sea wolf, his pirate – Prime Minister designate Stepashin – turns up in the nick of time, flintlock pistol at the ready, to imprison the malefactors in a sea chest for his master. Another recent episode had Primakov, then still prime minister, going to Freud for psychoanalysis.

In a piece extremely critical of Chernomyrdin's role as Yeltsin's mediator in Yugoslavia carried in the Communist newspaper *Sovetskaya Rossiya* (1 6 99), its Editor-in-Chief V Chikin and *Zavtra*'s Editor-in-Chief A Prokhanov commented on his utterances thus: "he set off for Belgrade, where the best Serbian linguists are trying to comprehend the speech of the envoy who seems to express himself in Sanskrit." *Kukly* beat the two Communist editors to it by a couple of weeks when they had the notoriously unintelligible Russian "John Prescott" pathetically say: "Okay, perhaps I cannot speak, but I can read!"

"Kukly" has made it to Georgian television. Twenty-three-year-old Merab Gekechkori, who first attracted attention with his Shevardnadze puppet when working as a waiter in a Tbilisi restaurant, now has his own TV show, "Tales for Adults," in which he engages in conversation on matters political with "Mr President," perfectly imitating his voice. The actors voicing the Georgian "Kukly" include a former MP. As correspondent Irina Bamaridze writes in Russia's *Komsomolskaya Pravda* newspaper (6 4 99): "The devisers of the program have tried to recruit other politicians to dub their puppet doubles, but the politicians, contrary to received opinion, have proven to be poor actors."

Hair Trigger

Tongue-in-cheek, but showing an awareness of politicians' hypersensitivity, the national daily *Segodnya* (27 5 99) ran the following item, complete with photograph of the flop-eared bunny protagonist Stepashka:

"Television viewers have been worried about the absence on ORT [Russian Public Television] of one of the key figures in the universally loved program 'Good Night, Children.' *Segodnya* approached the channel's Children's and Youth Broadcasting Service for an explanation. 'Is it true, we asked the television bosses, that Stepashka has been 'cut out' for political reasons' – because of the similarity of the hare's name to that of you know who?' Valentina Prasolova, head of the 'Good Night, Children' production company, stated that there could be no question of censorship in a children's programme. Stepashka's disappearance occurred during the holiday: 'We did not broadcast on the 1st and 2nd [May], and then there were repeats, in which Stepashka by pure chance did not appear. This has nothing to do with the appointment of the new prime minister [Sergey Stepashin]. There will be a good deal of Stepashka in June.'"

Yekaterinburg was mentioned in the last issue apropos of the new puppet theatre there. The Yekaterinburg Festival's payment of the Moscow-Yekaterinburg leg of the journey for UNIMA scholarship-holders is, by the way, no small matter. Yekaterinburg is located in the Urals, 1,167 kilometres from Moscow. The city, the third largest in Russia, has now reclaimed its original name, which goes back to the time of Peter the Great, having been renamed Sverdlovsk (after a leading Bolshevik) in 1924. The region, however, is still called Sverdlovsk Oblast.

I subsequently came across this article by Svetlana Dobrynina (in the Moscow-published national daily *Nezavisimaya Gazeta*, 6 3 99) about a retired Petrushka performer from those parts. It is difficult to know what connection this Petrushka has to the traditional figure, which is, *apart from anything else*, a glove puppet. It may be just a "sport," like Waldo Lanchester's splendid marionette Punch or, for that matter, the stringed Punch at the Guild's recent auction. I have little information on current Petrushka practice (if members do, I should be very pleased to receive it). Dan Bishop, writing up his trip to the 6th Urals Festival of Puppet Theatres, in the Punch and Judy Fellowship publication (May/June 1996), says that the Tyumen-based Kuzins perform Petrushka in a manner that Anna Nekrilova, the writer on

Petrushka: from *Adventures of a Russsian Puppet Theatre* by Nina Effimova

Petrushka, praises as authentic. (Readers may have seen the Kuzins perform as part of the "Héros Populaires" component of Charleville '91.)

One last thought, or rather a comment in the Russian press the other day by Iosif Kobzon, popular singer and member of parliament, who railed against censorship (on being told he could not sing a particular song on television), comparing it to the regimentation of Soviet times, when the authorities prescribed not only the songs you could sing but every word of them.

Petrushka No Longer Dances: Marionettes Have Always Been Obedient in Clever, Hard-Working Hands

Yekaterinburg – Two large suitcases and a case with an accordion take up more room in Mariya Zenkova's flat than her sofa. For decades she trundled them around to clubs and schools in several oblasts [regions]. There was not a village in the vicinity of Sverdlovsk where her posters have not appeared: "Roll up, roll up, and see the marionette circus! Jolly Petrushka, the acrobat with a ladder, the skilful conjurer, and the Korean juggler extend you an invitation!" Then there appeared in the village the puppeteer herself, who magically made the puppets dance and talk – to the delight of children and adults.

Distance is very important in the marionette theatre. When you are about five metres away, you cannot see the strings at all, and the action is so realistic that it as if the puppet has been imbued with a soul. "Without a soul it is pointless," according to Mariya Nikolayevna. Strange though it may seem, given that she has devoted 50 years to the stage, she had no special training whatsoever. Everything somehow fell into place of its own accord, as if on guide strings. On marrying in June 1941 she went with her husband to Kursk Oblast. Then came the war, the German offensive, evacuation, and her début at the philharmonic society. A successful one. The skilful young accordion-player with a loud voice was engaged to perform at the frontline. Thus Zenkova joined the ranks of Soviet performers. In the late forties, an old puppeteer called Tatyana Donskaya realized during a performance that she would be unable to go back on stage after the interval and asked Mariya, who was accompanying her on the accordion, to finish the puppet show for her. Everything went wonderfully easily: it was if her fingers had pulled the strings and made the puppets dance and turn somersaults with confidence all her life, while her ringing voice cried out: "Hello, I am Petrushka, I welcome you all." From that evening on the ancient marionettes – round-eyed and brightly-coloured – acquired a new mistress.

These were the first puppets in Mariya's life. In her childhood she had not been interested in such trifles. She preferred to climb fences with the boys. But now it was as if she had acquired children. And it was necessary to sew new costumes for them, to see to the way they looked, comb their hair, compose verses for the performance. And devise an appropriate introduction. During Stalin's time you had to remember to thank the party and the "father of the peoples" personally for your happy childhood, while during the Khrushchev era you had to remind the children of the heroic conquest of the Virgin Lands. Mariya Nikolayevna preferred not to delve more deeply into politics than this. There is no point in getting puppets involved in people's problems. That is why Zenkova is now astounded by some public speakers: why do they turn us all into puppets in public and try to pull our strings – and so cackhandedly.

A marionettist's professionalism is determined by "a sense of the floor and rhythm," the puppet has to tread the stage with confidence and, what's more, perform a merry tap-dance. At the World Youth Festival in Moscow in 1957 Sergey Obraztsov spotted the undoubted talent of Mariya Zenkova from the provinces. He offered her a job in his theatre and all but guaranteed her the title of "Meritorious Artist" and then "People's Artist," but the puppeteer chose another path. Not perhaps a glorious one, but one that paid: She was raising two boys, who needed to be fed and clothed. On an actor's salary, and, what's more, without a roof over their head in Moscow, they would have been condemned to several years of poverty, whereas you could make a decent living in the Soviet rural clubs. And she did not want for esteem. The first secretaries of rayon [district] party committees would send their personal limousines to fetch the performer from the oblast centre. In the late eighties they wanted to nominate her for the once-sought-after title of Meritorious Artist of the Russian Soviet Federated Socialist Republic, but *perestroika* relegated Petrushka to the background.

Relegated to the point that Mariya Nikolayevna cannot even find a successor. The marionettes' pranks seem too primitive to her fellow-artists, who are keen to expose social evils and want to make an impression during the performance. Colourful, big-nosed Petrushka; his red-cheeked, round-eyed girlfriends who sing comic ditties; coquettish Marysya dancing with jaunty Gritsko – they rarely appear in public today. Only of an evening does the puppeteer take them out of their dark suitcase so that they can converse in whispers. And she has a simple belief that, in clever, hard-working hands, puppets will do whatever you ask of them.

Puppet Personae

You may be aware of Russia's prestigious Golden Mask National Theatre Awards, these having received some publicity here recently with (Cheek by Jowl's) Declan Donnellan winning a Golden Mask for the St Petersburg Maly Drama Theatre's production of "The Winter's Tale," which was brought over to the Brighton Festival and then to its London "home," The Lyric, Hammersmith – at the end of May. However, you probably will not know that the Golden Mask jury's special prize for best female role of the 1997-1998 season went to a puppeteer, Natalya Barannikova, for her work in the Ten' theatre's "PI Tchaikovsky. Swan Lake. The Opera." Barannikova was born in Samara in 1970 and has worked in the Ten' family puppet theatre since 1988. *Nezavisimaya Gazeta* (which, for some reason, affords the best general newspaper coverage of puppetry) carried a substantial (1,600-word) interview with her in its 15 April issue. However, I supply here merely a brief puppetry item from that same day's issue by Besik Pipiya.

Puppets' 80th Birthday

St Petersburg – The curtain was first raised at the St Petersburg Marionette Theatre Named After Yevgeniy Demeni – the first professional puppet theatre in Russia – 80 years ago. Spectators were shown Pushkin's *Tale of Tsar Saltan.* Yevgeniy Shvarts and Samuil Marshak wrote their first plays for the theatre. Around 250 shows have been presented on the theatre's stage, and they have included the country's first puppet productions of Cervantes, Shakespeare, Molière, Swift, Anatole France, Pushkin, Gogol, Chekhov, and Maeterlinck. The theatre was run by the outstanding actor and director Yevgeniy Demmeni for around half-a-century. With his involvement puppet theatres were opened in Nizhniy Novgorod, Sverdlovsk, Kharkiv, Odessa, Tbilisi, and other cities. The theatre possesses a unique collection of puppets – the work of wonderful sculptors and wood carvers. These include marionettes acquired from folk puppeteers, and glove puppets from a late 19th-century French theatre which Demmeni bought in a commission shop and used in his first productions of "Harlequinade" and "Columbine's Kiss." The more than 1,000 magnificent marionettes are a priceless treasure trove preserved in the theatre. The theatre's current repertoire includes 17 shows, created from works by Russian and foreign authors. The theatre puts on 330 shows a year, entertaining 42,000 spectators.

Indonesia/Malaysia

The *Bulletin*, including the last issue, has carried material on the political uses of *wayang*. This theme is further explored here by Mr Tjahjono Rahardjo. For permission to reprint the article from *Balungan* (Vol 6 Nos 1-2 1998) we are grateful to the author and to Jody Diamond, editor of that publication of the American Gamelan Institute (see page 20 for publishing details). Mr Rahardjo is an architect and *wayang* aficionado. He lives in Semarang, Central Java, and teaches at Soegijapranata University.

On reading his article I was reminded of something that Clara van Groenendael wrote (*The Dalang Behind the Wayang*, p 195): "The performances, in fact, clearly show, in my opinion, that the dalang's role in society simply cannot be that of a government programme counsellor unless these programmes have already been accepted by the people, as this role consists precisely in articulating the thoughts and feelings of his audiences. As of old, his task is ngladosi masarakat, or 'to serve the people', as [dalang] Sutayat, too, repeatedly emphasized." Though the pressures on dalang are increasing all the time.

Despite Kosovo, politics and Indonesia have been much in the news. During the June elections in Indonesia – which popular unrest forced on the successor government to Suharto, led by his protégé, JB Habibie – the streets were awash with red, the colour of the Indonesian Democratic Party of Struggle, led by Megawati Sukarnoputri, daughter of the country's founding president, Sukarno, who was effectively ousted by General Suharto in 1966-67. Her party did notably well, and she is the front-runner in the presidential election in November. Let us hope Indonesia avoids another autocrat and that political dress becomes a coat of many colours.

Gamelan enthusiasts are, understandably, more familiar with Indonesian terms and realia than the average puppeteer, and so I supply these extra glosses: Susuhunan, sovereign of Surakarta, Central Java; alun-alun, main square, to the north and south of Central Javanese kraton (palaces); lakon, play; jaipong(an), popular dance with sensuous movements from Sunda, West Java; dangdut, pop music with heavy Indian tabla rhythm.

The New Order and Reformasi: The Wayang Scene in Semarang

Tjahjono Rahardjo

Shortly after General Soewardi was appointed as governor of Central Java in 1984, he embarked on a project to make the whole province yellow. Yellow was, of course, the colour of Suharto's ruling Golkar party. Soewardi ordered all government buildings, and also public facilities such as telephone booths and bus shelters, to be painted yellow. Even curbs and pedestrian crossings were painted black and yellow instead of the usual black and white. In many cases, overenthusiastic government officials ordered people to paint the fences of their home yellow. When the fences surrounding the two holy banyan trees at the alun-alun of Surakarta were painted yellow, that was too much for some members of the kraton family. So, with the blessing of the Susuhunan, they repainted it back to white, their original colour. This encouraged people to do the same thing to the public facilities. The government immediately painted them yellow again; thus starting what was later dubbed "the battle of colours."

This *program kuningisasi* ["yellowizing" program] also affected the monthly *wayang kulit* performances in front of the gubernatorial office in Semarang, supposedly held for the purpose of preserving the art of *wayang kulit*. The performers (*dhalang*, *niyaga*, and *swarawati* [shadow puppetmaster, musicians, and female singers]) had to wear yellow costumes. The stage was covered with yellow carpet and the audience sat on yellow coloured chairs. These performances were organised by a government-sponsored organization for *dhalang* and other *wayang* artists (whose chairman was not a *wayang* artist but a high-ranking government official): the Lembaga Pembina Seni Pedhalangan Indonesia (GANASIDI). The GANASIDI performances, however, were more like variety shows than *wayang kulit* performances. Instead of one screen, they had two, with two or three *dhalang* performing together, sometimes even at the same time. As if that were still not enough, they would also have *dangdut* singers, comedians and *jaipong* dancers joining in the *lakon*.

The general public loved those shows, but many *dhalang* and serious connoisseurs of *wayang* were not at all happy. Most of them, however, suffered in silence. One of the few people brave enough to stand up was Ki Timbul Hadiprajitno, a senior *dhalang* from Yogyakarta. He said "I will never share the stage with a comedian even if the President, let alone a mere governor, ordered me to do so." In those days you needed a lot of courage to make such a statement and of course Ki Timbul was never invited to perform at the governor's office.

Today, Soewardi is not the governor any more. He might even be tried for corruption. Gone are the monthly *wayang* performances in front of the governor's office. There are in fact considerably fewer performances these days, as very few people can afford to have a *wayang kulit* performance. Of the few performances held in Semarang recently, the most interesting one was the one at the local headquarters of Megawati Sukarnoputri's Democratic Party, to mark the successful ending of the party's congress in Bali. A well-known *dhalang* from Klaten seemed to be more interested in making a political statement and criticizing the Habibie government than presenting a *lakon*. Despite the drastic decline in orders to perform, many *dhalang* are enjoying their newly found freedom. Ki Manteb Sudarsono, for instance, was seen at several political meetings and rallies. Many *dhalang* have left GANASIDI and declared that they will never be willing to be used by the government anymore.

Wayang orang [literally, "human *wayang*," *wayang* stories performed as dance drama by a live cast], on the other hand, is enjoying a sort of comeback (although not a very dramatic one). At least that is the case of the Wayang Orang Ngesthi Pandowo company in Semarang. It might be because they have moved to a new location on a busy street, it might also be because the price of movie tickets is now so prohibitively high that many people go to see the *wayang orang* instead. *Wayang orang* is one of the few kinds of entertainment ordinary people can still afford in this time of severe economic crisis. In any case, Ngesthi Pandowo is able to attract at least a hundred people on Wednesday nights (when the tickets are sold at half price) and Saturday nights. On other nights there are at least twenty-five people. And fortunately Semarang is still much safer than Jakarta, so people are not afraid to go out in the evening to see a wayang performance.

The Mouse Deer – Sang Kancil

I took my own implicit advice (in the last issue) and went to see Golden Deer Shadow Theatre perform *wayang kancil*, an "environmentally-sound" modern *wayang* form aimed primarily at a young audience, in South Weald Park, Essex, in June.

The story might, in the current jargon, be described as site-specific, given that it featured a property developer bent on turning the surrounding woodland, inhabited by the mouse deer and friends, notably snails, into patio furniture and covering the open fields with yet another housing estate. However, the day (a day when, coincidentally, the election of the country's first two Green MEPs was announced) is eventually saved by Kancil the "fixer," who enlists the services of the Beast of Brentwood, aka the tiger, to dispose of the property tycoon the way *his* nature dictates.

The 10-piece gamelan played most agreeably on a sultry Sunday afternoon, and the *wayang kulit* figures, made by Ki Ledjar Subroto of Yogyakarta, were nicely manipulated by Sarah Bilby. The script (in English) was deft and amusing – with, in Indonesian fashion, in-jokes about the players and a known member of the audience – and I particularly enjoyed the *dhalang's* singing in Javanese. We shall be publishing something by Sarah on this *wayang* form.

There have in fact been several opportunities in the last few months to spy real mouse deer on television natural history programmes. This smallest hoofed mammal, found in mainland and archipelagic Southeast Asia, is – in his folk-tale incarnation as Sang Kancil – the subject of *Fables and Folk-Tales from an Eastern Forest*, collected and translated by Walter Skeat (best known as founder of the English Dialect Society (1873) and compiler of the *Etymological Dictionary of the English Language* (1879-82)). More modern accounts can no doubt be found, but I quote from the Introduction to *Fables* because of the quaintness of diction (only 100 years old!): "The Tales contained in this little volume were taken down from the lips of Malay peasantry, in the twilight of their own tropical jungle, during the progress of the Cambridge Expedition of 1899 through the remoter states of the Malay Peninsula. The tales themselves, as will be obvious to the reader, are the merest gleanings from an extensive harvest-field, and make no pretensions whatever to any completeness or finality....

"The hero of these tales is a small chevrotain which is to be found in almost every part of the jungles of Malaya. It is commonly called the Malayan Mouse-deer; but in spite of its name it belongs rather to the antelope tribe, the heel-bone (os calsis) of its hinder leg projecting in a fashion which I believe is never seen in the true deer. Its eye-teeth, too, are curiously long and projecting, and its hoofs are cloven to an extent which in so small a creature is really remarkable. At the same time it is a most beautiful little animal, with big dark pleading eyes and all the grace and elegance of a gazelle. It is a favourite character in Malayan folk-tales, in which it is credited with such inexhaustible powers of resource and mother-wit that it is often given the name of 'Ment'ri B'lukar,' the 'Vizier of the Underwood' (or 'Brush'). No difficulties are too great for it to overcome; no perils can daunt it; even the savage lords of Forest-glade and River-pool suffer contumelious defeat when 'Friend' Mouse-deer is their adversary. In fact, the place occupied by the Mouse-deer in Malayan Folk-lore is exactly analogous to the place occupied by Reynard the Fox in the folk-tales of Europe and by Brer Rabbit in the immortal cycle of tales which take their name from 'Uncle Remus.'"

I have mentioned before that puppetry material is quite often to be found in gamelan publications. The previous issue of *Seleh Notes*, the UK Gamelan Network Newsletter, carried a review of the Raffles exhibition by its editor, Sheila Cude, and an article on *wayang golek*, with particularly expressive Javanese illustrations, by Anna Ingleby (the article had previously appeared in shortened form in *Animations*). The current issue (Vol 6 No 3) contains, among other things, an article on *wayang kancil* by Sarah Bilby; an article by Gildas-Louis Coudrin (author of *Wayang Golek – Tradition Vivante*) on working with former drug addicts in Italy on episodes of the Ramayana story using the three-dimensional Javanese puppets; and an article by Anna Ingleby on *wayang topeng* (masked dance) from Cirebon. *Seleh*, published three times a year at £5, is available from Sheila Cude, Flat 3, 69 Hillfield Avenue, London N8 7DS; email seleh.notes@palay.ndirect.co.uk; web site www.palay.ndirect.co.uk/seleh.notes

Balungan, the publication from which the article by Tjahjono Rahardjo is taken, also treads the *wayang* field. For example, Vol 3 No 3 Dec 1988 has "An introduction to wayang kulit Cirebon" by Richard North (Cirebon, on the northern coast of Java, has its own highly distinctive, multi-influenced style in all the arts, including its famous batik); two other articles in the same issue cover Cirebonese music and topèng). In Vol 5 No 2 Summer/Fall 1993 – an issue focusing on Sunda, the Western part of Java – see, in particular, though it is fruitless to try to separate the arts of Indonesia, "Linking Past and Future: Asep Sunandar Sunarya, Irawati Durban Arjo, & Endo Suanda," an interview conducted by Kathy Foley with three leaders of the Sundanese arts (Asep

Sunandar Sunarya of Bandung is the top performer of Wayang Golek Purwa); and "Our laughter balances our tears: Humor in Sundanese Arts" by Sean Williams.

Two issues of *Balungan* per annum cost $16 + $5 for surface mail outside the States. It is published by the American Gamelan Institute, Box 1052, Lebanon, NH 03766, USA. Phone and fax: 603-448-8837. Email: agi@gamelan.org. The AGI website is http://www.gamelan.org/; see also frogpeak @sover.ne The AGI catalogue, which also includes *wayang* postcards and the like, is very worth looking at. Written material contained in it of which you may not be aware includes *Behind the Shadows: Understanding a Wayang Performance* by Helen Pausacker (1996) and *Umar & Amir: The Iconography and Ethos of the Rod-Puppetry of Central Java* by Robert Steven Petersen (1992). Most of the videos are American-format only, but the 48-minute-long *The Prosperity of Wibisana: a study guide*, in which Dalang Widiyanto discusses his performance of the *Ramayana*, describing plot, main characters, and musical relationships in the *wayang*, is available in PAL.

New Puppet Theatre in Lleida

A quarter-page article in *El País* (31 5 99) entitled "Puppeteers on the crest of the wave" announces the forthcoming opening of a new puppet theatre in Lleida (Cataluña) which will be the base for the Lleida Puppet Centre, including a 185-seat performance space. The building is the old Convent of Saint Teresa, and the theatre itself is the converted chapel. The project was the brainchild of Julieta Agustí and Joan Andreu Vallvé, who have been running the Lleida Puppet Centre for 13 years. Their work covers educational projects, running the annual Lleida puppet festival and, of course, shows. They are currently preparing a spectacular Nativity play for presentation at the National Theatre of Cataluña in December.

Percy Press Auction

The auction of UNIMA Member of Honour Percy Press II's puppets (some inherited from his father) in London 12 June was a treat for anyone who was a friend of Percy and cherishes Punch and Judy figures, though there were other items (vent dolls and variety-act puppets – Durante, Holloway....). You very seldom have the chance to see and bid for so many fine figures: Fred Tickners (including the large Punch used in the old Arts Council film), Bob Wades (a set of seven P&J figures went to Japan for, as I recall, £850), Bryan Clarkes (early figures), Ken Barnards (including some specially commissioned left-handed Punches for when Judy gets the "upper hand"), and Konrad Frederickses (whose puppets Percy used, among others, toward the end of his life). An excellent set of presentation-quality wartime-Punch figures (Judy works in the NAAFI, the clown is a cook....) made for Percy by Ken Barnard failed to reach the reserve. (You will know Percy's father had a famous "Khakhi Punch" routine.) I had enjoyed seeing Percy use them on two occasions and, had I had the money available (and rest assured, Ken, you do not have to die first for your skill to be appreciated), I would have bought them; but, as it was, I came away with four pleasing but more modest items. The afternoon was enhanced by the informed, amusing patter of his brother Leslie, who acted as auctioneer ("our father entertained troops during the war with them" apropos of a pair of bruised boxers in stripy jumpers made by Fred Tickner), with only occasional dissent as to the provenance, description, or use of the puppets from other members of the family – there in force – and members of the knowing audience. Some might regret that a fine set of Wade figures should go abroad, but, if someone in Japan has the eye to appreciate the craftsmanship, all to the good; we do, after all, have Wade puppets here, and it is, in any case, surely in keeping with the spirit of Percy the globetrotter that some of the puppets should go "walky, walky, walky" too.

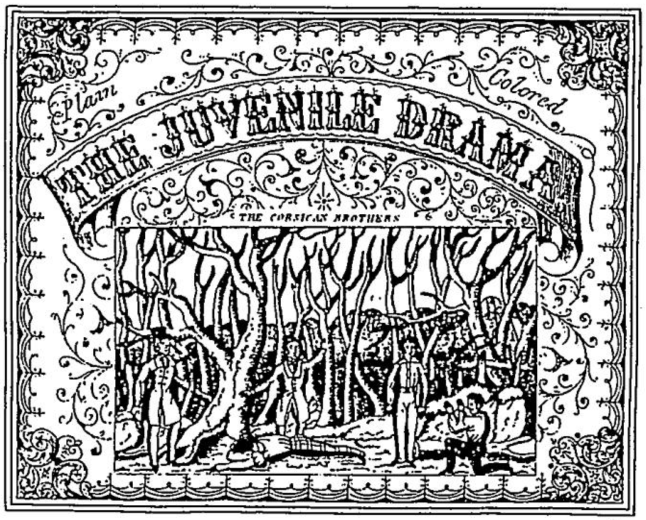
“Es is nichts, nur Papier,
und doch ist es die ganze Welt”
– Peter Høeg.

Toy Theatre Symposium 26-28 February, 1999, Landesmuseum Oldenburg, Near Bremen, North Germany

Peter Peasgood

This biennial symposium was held a little earlier than Easter this year, at the impressive Oldenburger Schloss, and was timed to coincide with the last two days of a large toy-theatre exhibition, which had opened on 6 September 1998. Recently acquired from Denmark, this magnificent collection of theatres, sheets, and memorabilia was the lifetime’s work of Helge Schenstrøm, the daughter of Carl Schenstrøm (1881-1942), the comedy stage and film actor who was Pat of Pat & Patachon, a Scandinavian double act. The collection was all the more interesting in that Carl’s costumes, photographs, makeup box, and even snippets of film had been acquired with the main collection. The duo of Pat & Patachon is not known here, but someday we may see one of their feature films; at least I do hope so – the excerpts I saw were most captivating.

The Oldenburger Landesmuseum is, as is so usual in Germany, situated in the Ducal Palace, a short walk from the Wieting Hotel, where we were all staying. The collection, which consisted of a great number of lit sets, was well presented in glass cases in very large galleries, and further rooms had been set aside for Toy Theatre performances and workshops for children. At 1.30 on the first day we were welcomed by Dr Doris Weiler-Streichsbier, the organiser and Keeper of the toy-theatre collection. The symposium proper took place in the private rooms of the restoration department, and the first lecture was a comparison of similar Danish and German sheets consisting mainly of scenes from Michael Strogoff (1882) presented by Paula von Sydow and Dietger Dröse and assisted by the enthusiastic holding up of sheets by Willers Antrup. Plenty of overhead projection of Jacobsen designs with back illumination of fires, both room and city. An interesting source for some of these sheets was the painting by Neils Simonsen “Bei Sankelmark” (1864) in the National Danisches Volkmuseum. An absorbing and most informative hour or so.



At these symposiums there are usually one or two toy-theatre performances, and this year we had “Das Käthchen von Heilbronn and “Vom Fischer und syn Fru.” Presented by Per Brink Abrahamsen, “Das Käthchen von Heilbronn” by Heinrich von Kleist (1777-1811) has all the elements required of the Gothic Drama. The play was first performed in Vienna in 1810 and was Kleist’s most famous and popular success. Romance interwoven with supernatural folk-tale elements, chivalry, and honour. What more could one ask of a toy-theatre production? The plot includes the Sacred Secret Court of Justice, in old German *Vehmgericht* or *Der Gottesgerichtskampf*, a favourite theme of the German Romantics. This play occupies an important historical position in both German theatre and German toy theatre, Winckelmann & Söhne (Berlin) with Oehmigke & Riemschneider (Neu-Ruppin) having published sheets of characters and scenery. Early costume plates were published in 1825 by Winckelmann. All the figures portraying on the sheets that noble- mindedness so essential to the plot. Schinkel’s scenery designs for the Berlin production have been copied for toy theatre, so retaining a unique record of an early performance. The great advantage of these symposiums is the way our knowledge is pushed forward by performers like Per Brink Abrahamsen in revealing to us such an esoteric play. A German colleague I spoke to back in Leicester still remembers with affection her school production in prewar Vienna. To reinforce our knowledge, an amusing public lecture was given afterwards by Dr Grathoff of Oldenburg University upon the themes within Heinrich von Kleist's play. The other production, "Vom Fischer und syn Fru," performed by Invisius of Berlin (Rüdiger & Dorette Koch), has already been well reviewed – by me, following the 1997 Preetz Festival, and by Charles Broughton, after the 1998 Troyes Festival. I can only add, that this time the performance took place in the very large church of St Lamberti, with live musicians strengthening the already eerie atmospheric scene changes. A small, ancient carillon fastened high to an external wall of this impressive church still chimes some old German hymns at midday, a very suitable companion to the Invisius play. The next day we had an extensive tour of the collection with Paula von Sydow explaining the most important theatres. The 249 exhibits of the collection were shown off in the most brilliant style – both in glass cases and on walls. All the setups gave the impression that a performance was about to take place, and were lit in a most imaginative way. Almost every facet, age, and country of toy theatre was on show and each one of us had a favourite. I saw an amazing (Pegasus Theatre, 1947) 10cm Errol Flynn with Olivia De Havilland, Basil Rathbone and Claude Rains in the famous castle scene from the 1938 Hollywood Technicolor film *The Adventures of Robin Hood*. The circular tower with its spiral staircase upon which Robin and Guy of Gisborne duelled had been cleverly designed so that toy-theatre figures would operate. Too many items to record here. I recommend the purchase of the excellent catalogue with its well written historical essays: *Papiertheater aus der Sammlung Helge Schenstrøm* (45 DM, p&p 12 DM). This catalogue is also a complete primer for toy-theatre constructors and includes the Zieharmonikatheater (concertina theatre) of Robert Poulter. (Write to the editor, Dr Doris Weiler-Streichsbier, Landesmuseum, Schloßplatz 26, D-26122 Oldenburg, Germany. Tel: 0441/220-2600; fax: 0441/220-2601.)

Christoph Clermont of the restoration department gave a very full demonstration of his skills in invisibly patching holes and recolouring damaged sheets. His patience in recreating the exact texture of the paper was extraordinary. In the afternoon Per Brink Abrahamsen by means of easy flow-charts gave a talk about the Elements of Toy Theatre, and this was made a little more digestible for Sylvia and me by his breaking into English every now and again with a wicked grin. The last session was devoted, as usual, to acting out an unprepared play, selected by Dietger Dröse. Volunteers were once more recruited without audition and without mercy. These sessions are the most tremendous fun, and this year's star was.... On second thoughts, the name is better unknown. In conjunction with local children an exhibition of their work in designing toy theatres and plays was on show in a special gallery. I always enjoy looking at this level of creativity since I think toy theatre has an immediate appeal for the young. The results were astonishing, every theatre was different, every play unlike another. New ideas had been tried without a care in the world – the only thing that mattered was the pleasure in creation and performance.

And then on to the Lamberti Keller (best meatballs in Germany) to carouse the night away. The restaurant requested a cartoon from me, since I had drawn one the night before to ease away an unfortunate accident with a beer glass. When finished with as many caricatures of the delegates as I could cram on to the page, it was glued into the largest guest book I have ever seen, and we all signed the opposite page.

"Puppets"
A Painting By Alvaro Guevara

John M Blundall

On numerous occasions over the years I have discovered interesting paintings in museums and galleries showing puppets of different types and techniques and in differing settings. Unfortunately – and quite often – on returning to the galleries to view the paintings, they had been removed. More than once, on asking about the whereabouts of the pictures, even the staff had no knowledge of them. This has not only been the case in terms of paintings but also examples of puppets themselves.

It has often been a source of annoyance to me that so many museums and galleries attach so little value and importance to the puppet. One recent good example of a serious interest in the subject of the puppet in painting comes from London's Tate Gallery.

Recently Hubert Lacroix presented the Tate Gallery with a painting by his grandfather, the Chilean painter Alvaro Guevara. It bears the title "Puppets," but has been known, more accurately, as "Marionettes." It shows the artist's keen interest in puppets, and an eye for a considerable amount of informed detail. The painting is thought to date from 1926. Guevara divided his time between Chile, London and Paris, and after 1918 spent a great deal of time painting puppets.

I recently had an opportunity to study two photographic reproductions of this painting as a means of trying to identify the possible origins and whereabouts of the puppets represented in the work. The following is a summary of my observations.

Despite the loose impressionistic style of painting, the picture shows considerable detail and, as far as I can tell, well-observed accuracy in the detail. The painting depicts a group of some sixteen marionettes, which are casually suspended from a primitive framework, each by a short length of string attached to a single horizontal stick control. Each figure has five strings: one to each hand, one to each leg, and one to the top of the head – this is attached to a screw-eye-type loop. It is possible that this may not be a string but a fine metal rod.

Owing to the way the figures are suspended, they assume very relaxed attitudes: this clearly demonstrates that the body and limbs lack any substantial jointing, or solid underlying form. The costumes on the figures show considerable detail, but generally lack an overall style or quality. They are an eccentric group of long, thin characters, and may not have been created for any one play. Some of them are clearly clowns – one character on the right-hand side of the painting wears a smock and tricorn hat. This figure clearly shows the method of fixing the string or rod to the head of the figure.

The heads are carved in a somewhat naive style, crudely painted, most having staring eyes, and they may be the work of more than one person. A study of the hands, legs and heads of the figures also reveals a range of styles, but one observation, based on seeing similar figures over the years, is that some of them may have been partly constructed from other figures – hand figures similar to those available in large numbers in toy shops in the Netherlands, France, Germany, and England in the late 19th century. The heads of the figures could, in some cases, also be recarved from the wooden heads of these commercial puppets. The hands, and the long, thin legs and feet, are also similar to those found on such examples.

The figures hang in front of a backcloth painted using vigorous brush strokes which create an impression of a forest on fire. On each side, hanging from a length of string stretched above the framework which supports the figures, there are two curtains, which appear to be made from floral furnishing brocade. The whole, somewhat crude, set-up stands in front of what looks like French-style, striped wallpaper.

On analysis, it seems to me, that this group of figures, and the setting, are very much the kind of thing that may have been produced in the 19th century for the purpose of home entertainment. I also feel that the painting may have been done in France – there is a strong French, or even Italian, feel to the figures. I have frequently seen single figures of a similar style in flea markets and antique shops in Western Europe.

There is a set of figures in the Musée Gadagne de Lyon described as 18th-century "Tringles Vénétiennes" which is similar to the figures under discussion here. Even so, I feel sure that the figures in the painting are probably French, 19th century, and from a family home theatre.

The Guevara is in conservation at present, but could well figure in the new-acquisitions hanging in 2000. Apart from the well-known Haydon "Punch on May Day" (1829), P&J fans might like to know that the Tate has Arthur Boyd Houghton's "Punch and Judy" (circa 1860) and Macdonald Gill's "Punch and Judy" (1911).

North and South of the River

The British Museum is holding an exhibition of Japanese masks. Most of them are for the performance of *Kagura*, a popular dance-drama originating largely in the Shinto religion, though it also includes Nō theatre, Buddhist, and court-drama masks. Some masks of the Nō drama and the humorous *kyogen* plays actually have their origin in the rural *Kagura*. Do not neglect the prints either. Compare, for example (a caption helpfully prompts), the different approach to masks in juxtaposed *manga* by Hokusai and the somewhat later and less famous Kyosai (1760-1849). Hokusai's treatment is comic, whereas Kyosai takes a more historical and antiquarian interest in particular Nō and *kyogen* masks, sometimes giving the maker's name – a clue to the fact that he was himself a skilled practitioner of these two forms.

Understandable publicity and justified appreciation accompanied the recent revelation of the name of the British Museum's largest-ever donor, Gerry Weston, who has given £20 million towards the Great Court project. However, we should also be grateful for more modest and less-bruited bequests such as Mr Nobutaka Oka's 80 masks, collected by him because he felt "they were imbued with a particular dignity and character." Many show signs of continued use, while others are worm-eaten or otherwise distressed through age.

I would think that "Oddities under Heaven: The Popular Print in England 1550-1850," the "tabloid" ephemera of street and tavern, which runs concurrently at the BM, would also be of interest to readers. Catch both exhibitions before 30 August.

The evening of 19 March at the transpontine Royal Festival Hall was devoted to the music of Zbigniew Preisner. Most media attention was focused on the large-scale work *Requiem for my friend* (the friend in question being the film maker Krzysztof Kieslowski, who died in March 1996), which was receiving its British premiere, but the second half of the concert – also a premiere here, as it happens – given over to *A suite of film music* – began with *Puppets*, improvisation on the theme of *Les Marionnettes*, from *The Double Life of Veronique*, with which therefore some readers will already be familiar. For what it is worth, judging by, admittedly, just this one hearing of the *Requiem*, and even allowing for the fact that the RFH acoustic was not sympathetic and that the cleaner sound of CD would enhance it, his music works better for me within the film frame.

Nice Work

The Musée d'art moderne et d'art contemporain, Nice, held a retrospective of Enrico Baj earlier in the year. This artist, born in Milan in 1924, a member of the College of Pataphysics and thus a great admirer of Jarry, will indeed be best known to puppeteers as the creator of the characters and props – all made out of Meccano – for

Massimo Schuster's "Ubu Roi" in 1984. Ubu Père and Mère, as well as Palotin Giron and Captain Bordure, all transform into crazy machines. An exhibition catalogue is available.

Media Watch

Political Puppets

"This Robin Fook. Who is this Robin Gook?... The English nation are a gentle nation, whom I greatly admire, but this man is a small hairy muppet" – the Sarajevo-born, Serbian film director Emir Kusturica (*The Time of the Gypsies*; *Black Cat, White Cat*) interviewed in *The Guardian* (23 4 99). The identity of that Scottish gnomelike (not "gnomic," as the journalist would have us believe) political personage is too easy to guess. However, can you identify the following place referred to by Stephen Duffy, former member of Duran Duran? "Our second gig was at the puppet theatre in.... It was 50p to get in that night. The puppets had bigger dressing rooms." See end of Media Watch for answer.

The dismissal of Vladimír Železný as director of the Czech Republic's highly successful, populist television station TV Nova for "exceeding his powers" prompted *The Guardian* (23 4 99) to publish a photograph of him flanked by "spitting image" puppets of Václav Havel and Václav Klaus. The ousted media magnate has been described as wielding as much power in the republic as the president or former prime minister.

A reader in a letter to *Sovetskaya Rossiya* (11 5 99) essayed a rather more complex and pertinent metaphor apropos Yeltsin than the usual "puppetmaster," "pulling the strings" clichés. Nowadays, the president often has to be literally led by the hand, such is his tendency to stumble: "Among the multitude of theatrical genres you have one where actors wearing dark costumes and trying to blend into the background operate a brightly painted, life-size puppet, saying its words for it. If I am not mistaken, this genre is known in Japan as *joruri....*" He continues the metaphor when describing a meeting at which Yeltsin peremptorily had Stepashin change places with Primakov in order to sit closer to him (this was just before he sacked Primakov to replace him with Stepashin and was a sign of impending change pounced upon by Kremlinologists). James Meeks also came up with an apposite Far Eastern theatrical image when describing this same scene (*The Guardian*, 16 5 99): "After starting to speak, the President suddenly stopped and looked round towards Primakov and the others on his right, his downturned mouth a Kabuki caricature of displeasure. 'You've sat down in the wrong places,' he growled.'"

To Bibi or Not To Bibi?

Well, as we know, it was not to be. All but two runners in the Israeli prime-ministerial race dropped out just before the election, and Ehud Barak trounced Binjamin Netanyahu. Israeli election broadcasts are much livelier than ours and, given the very low turnouts we have recently experienced, we could probably learn from them. There is a lot of music – ballad, rap, techno – but that, in the Land of Hartzufim, one of the funniest should involve puppets is no surprise. A heavily pregnant Arafat is on the delivery table being urged by the Labour Party leader not to give birth to independence *just yet.* Arafat obliged. Let us hope Barak will now deliver on his promise to the Palestinians, though considerable obstetric skill will still be needed to deliver overdue independence safely. The Hartzufim television puppet show is highly political. If you have access to the Internet, just key in Hartzufim (on, say, *infoseek*) and you will find several articles of interest.

"You don't have to be mad to be Belgian – but it helps"

Under this heading the travel section of *The Independent on Sunday* (11 4 99) devoted two pages to Liège and Ostend. Naturally, Tchantchès and his pékèt-drinking habit figure in the Outre-Meuse item (I believe Tchantchès-brand pékèt is only available at the Tchantchès Museum, Rue Surlet, though it is available elsewhere under other labels – one of which reminds you that this local gin is also the tipple of miners). This year is "Ensor Year" in Ostend, marking the 50th anniversary of the death of the hometown artist, who is best known for his carnival masks. The 20 or so commemorative events will include the enactment of five of his prominent paintings as *tableaux vivants* on the beach in July and August and – a much less well-known aspect of his output – performances of his music (which will be broadcast live from Ostend by Radio 3). *FRIDOLIN UNMASKED an incident in the life of JAMES ENSOR, A play for marionettes*, by John Furse, which was devised for John Phillips & Theatre Grotesque, is available.

Purloined Puppet?

The following excerpt is from an Associated Press item that appeared in the *Lexington Herald-Leader* (27 3 99) under the headline "Creators' family, museum squabble over Howdy." NBC broadcast more than 2,500 live episodes of *The Howdy Doody Show* between 1947 and 1960:

> "Howdy Doody, the freckle-faced puppet that entertained millions of American children in the 1950s, is in the middle of a custody battle.
>
> "A Detroit museum and the family of a Connecticut puppeteer who used to pull the marionette's strings are in a legal tug-of-war for the original redheaded doll in cowboy boots.
>
> "Howdy is sitting in a safe deposit box in Connecticut while the case plays out in federal court in Hartford.
>
> "The Detroit Institute of Arts, which has one of the largest collections of historically significant puppets in North America, is accusing Rufus Rose's three sons of purloining the puppet."

Euro-Puppet: Value for Money?

Euro-Puppet (Environment Puppet in a previous incarnation), the creation of Dieter Kussani, is touring German schools, providing information about the euro. Euro-Puppet is based on the traditional Kasper made out of limewood with a red cap and a long nose like Pinocchio. (See *The Daily Telegraph*, 4 3 99, for more, including a photograph.)

Pulling Barbie's Leg, or Nimble on Her Pins

Amid all the hype surrounding the eternally-nubile bathycolpous babe's 40th birthday (even *Le Monde* devoted a whole page to the billion-selling symbol of the American Way of Life, 1 2 99) you may have missed Susan Stern's *Barbie Nation: An Unauthorized Tour* (shown at the 13th London Lesbian & Gay Film Festival, April), an investigation which reveals that there is a less-than-wholesome side to the fashion phenomenon – Strap-On Barbie and Bisexual Ken with S&M thrown in – at least in the minds of some of the more parodically-minded fans. (And Tinky Winky falls foul of the Moral Majority too....) But you've got to hand it to her, prosthetists at Northern Carolina's Duke University are using the doll's legs to create artificial fingers for amputees. The legs are trimmed to fit each patient and work because the flexible joints in Barbie's legs allow the fingers to bend. Any puppet applications here?

Puppetry Notices

Kentridge's "Ubu" has an extended profile in *The Guardian*, 9 6 99; it is reviewed by Paul Taylor, *The Independent*, 14 6 99, who concludes "It all makes for a visceral, but not enlightening, evening"; Radio 3's Night Waves, 9 6 99, has comments by Kentridge and informed discussion between presenter Paul Allen and the play's reviewer, South African-born novelist Justin Cartwright, who believes "It could become a classic in South Africa." See *The Guardian*, 23 6 99, for 1½ pages on Burkett; Taylor dons critic's cap in *The Independent*, 30 6 99.

Answer to 50p gig (no prize for right answer, I'm afraid) is Cannon Hill Park. Given the paucity of fixed puppet theatres in this country, let alone ones capable of accommodating a band, everyone was in with a shout here, though being the pop-trivia expert on your pub quiz-team would have helped. Stephen Duffy was the Birmingham-based group's lead singer (pre-Simon Le Bon) in the late seventies.

Festivals

Magdeburg 2000

Publicity for the big UNIMA junket (24 June-2 July) will be going out with the next *Newsletter*.

Puppetry Festival (Pekan Wayang), Jakarta, August 7-14 1999

The 7th Indonesian Wayang Festival will feature more than 50 performances of Indonesian *wayang* forms from all over the archipelago as well as related arts from other ASEAN countries. Indonesian Wayang Festivals are held once every five 5 years, so this is the 30th year of the festival series.

The eight-day festival will include performances from morning to night in both indoor and outdoor theatres. Some of the most important and skilled performers in Indonesia are being brought from all parts of the country to represent as many varieties of *wayang* as possible. Rarely-seen forms will be presented, performers of related arts are being invited from other ASEAN countries, and foreigners who have studied *wayang* are being asked to come to Indonesia to perform. An exhibition of puppets, costumes, and other materials will be on display. A one-day seminar on globalization and ASEAN arts will run in parallel with the festival. The festival will take place primarily in the newly-finished Indonesia Wayang Building. Visitors will find this an unequalled, entertaining, exciting opportunity to enjoy and learn about the varieties of Indonesian *wayang* and other ASEAN theatre forms.

Please contact the Organizing Committee for further information.

Jl. Kalibesar Timor No. 16, Jakarta Barat 11110, Indonesia. Telephone: (62-21) 692-7289 or 692-9560; Fax: (62-21) 692-9560. Email: wayang@indosat.net.id

Loutkářská Chrudim

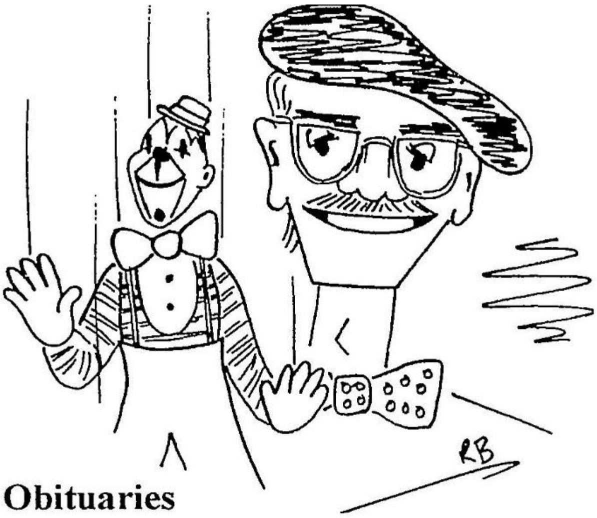
The Czech Republic has had a very strong amateur puppetry tradition since the end of the 19th century, and Chrudim (located roughly 100 kilometres from Prague and endowed with a wonderful puppetry museum) hosts the 48th annual showcase of that country's amateur puppetry 1-6 July. Contact Chrudimská Beseda, Široká 85, 537 01, Chrudim, Czech Republic; tel/fax 0455/3896, 622315; email CH@knihovna-cr.cz

Radvaň 99

Two regular festivals in Slovakia have been cancelled this year owing to lack of funds, but a small festival is being held 8-10 September in the Renaissance Manor House in Radvaň, Banská Bystrica. The aim of the festival is to help preserve and celebrate the traditions of folk touring puppet theatre and mark the 80th anniversary of the private puppet theatre in Radvaň, the establishment of which by the Anderle family in 1919 preceded the foundation of the Slovak National Theatre by a year. An exhibition of old Slovak and Czech marionettes, posters, and texts from the Anderle collection (which comprises over 600 marionettes) will be part of the festival. Martin Bridle will be flying the English colours. Contact Anton Anderle, Tradičné Bábkové Divadlo, Nám Ľ. Štúra 22, 974 01 Banská Bystrica, Slovakia; tel/fax ++ 421 88 4102096. Your editor has additional information.

XIXth International Festival of Puppetry Art, Bielsko-Biała, 29 April-4 May 2000

Contact Festival Office: Maria Scheybal and Piotr Rejnisz, Teatr Banialuka, ul. Mickiewicza 20, 43-300 Bielsko-Biała, Poland; tel/fax (4833) 8221046, 8221047, 8150915, email banialuka@in.com.pl or schejbal@friko6.onet.pl



Obituaries

Harry Tozer (1902-1999)

Acclaimed as El Gran Savi, Harry Tozer, UNIMA Member of Honour, passed away peacefully, aged 96, on Wednesday 9 June. Harry, educated in England, took a job in Barcelona in 1925, and lived there for the rest of his life. Inspired, in childhood, by a Punch and Judy show, he made his own puppets but quickly switched to marionettes, which became his main preoccupation. As the Spanish correspondent to Paul McPharlin's *International Yearbooks*, he introduced the traditional Catalan hand-puppet to the puppetry world, and then acquainted Barcelona with the marionette by running an amateur marionette group and, for several years, teaching marionette construction and operation at the Barcelona Theatre Institute to students from many countries.

Harry had many friends from all over the world and his home became a Mecca for puppeteers visiting Barcelona. He was extremely generous with his ideas and contributed numerous articles to *The Puppetmaster*, which served as an inspiration to many. During his lifetime he received many awards in recognition of his work, the last being the Gold Medal for Artistic Excellence, reported in the May *Newsletter*. The hope of all his friends, now, is that the promise by the Mayor of Barcelona of a Puppet Theatre dedicated to Harry Tozer, within the new Theatre Museum, will be honoured.

Since the death of his Polish wife, Wanda, in 1990, Harry had been well cared for in Barcelona by Stasia, a Polish widow and friend of the family. Harry's married daughter, Christine, lives in Madrid. To both these, and to marionettist Antonio Zaffra, who is charged with caring for Tozer's legacy, we extend our sympathies.

Cartoon of Harry Tozer with Pompilio, drawn by Richard Bradshaw.

Brian Matcham (1939-1999)

Our sympathies are extended to Loretta Howells, Director of the Puppet Centre, London, on the unexpected death of her husband. Former stage manager for the Royal Shakespeare Company, later head of BBC World Service programmes operations, and for a couple of years (1992-1994) Director of North West Arts Board, Brian Matcham was a well-known broadcaster in Europe on opera and musicals. He was a great-nephew of Britain's greatest and most prolific creator of theatres, the architect Frank Matcham, whose archive of plans and blueprints is held at The Theatre Museum.

See also *The Times*, 17 5 99.

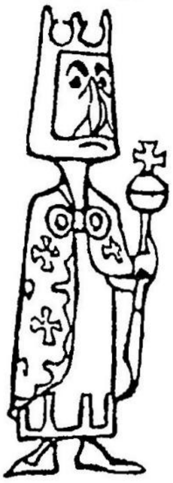
Wenceslao Moreno (1896-1999)

Wenceslao Moreno (Señor Wences), Salamanca-born bull-fighter and juggler, who emigrated to the United States in 1934, where he concentrated on ventriloquism, died 20 April. This thickly-accented "sleight-of-mouth" artist enjoyed a successful career with Pedro, the *disembodied* puppet with the "S'awright!" catchphrase, and Johnny (pronounced "Yonny"), a literal "hand puppet." Señor Vences' (regular) performances on the Ed Sullivan Show are the source of an amusing exchange in Barry Levinson's film *Tin Men* (set in 1963) between two salesmen, played by Bruno Kirby and Danny DeVito). See Dick Vosburgh's obituary in *The Independent* (28 4 99) and Michael Freedland's piece in *The Guardian* (20 5 99). The latter describes how Wences – "the ventriloquist's ventriloquist" – turned the unenviable job of warm-up man for Danny Kaye at the London Palladium in 1955 to his own account. John Furse, who saw him at the Palladium more than once, tells me he can certainly vouch for his brilliance.

Peter Brough (1916-1999)
The ventriloquist Peter Brough died 3 June. His BBC radio programme "Educating Archie" could draw an audience of more than 15 million over three nights in the 1950s. He is remembered by Dennis Barker in *The Guardian*, 7 6 99.

Arlyn Coad (1927-1999)
Arlyn Coad, the Artistic Director of Coad Canada Puppets, died 27 May, aged 72, of leukaemia. Daughter of a London Borough Surveyor, and a mother who designed court presentation gowns, she moved to Canada as an orphan, aged 19. Arlyn Coad married George Kuthan, a Czech student, whom she met whilst on holiday in Paris a few years later. George died when their three children were still young, and in 1964 she met her second husband-to-be, Luman Coad, then the director of the puppet theatre at Children's Fairyland in Oakland, California – the inspiration for Disneyland.

Coad Canada Puppets have gained much international recognition, particularly through awards at international festivals. "Up Please! A Slightly Satanic Somewhat Saintly Tale," designed by Arlyn Coad, is programmed to premiere at the Festival of the Millennium, Seattle, 1-7 August, 1999. (See cover of The Puppeteers of America's *The Puppetry Journal*, Summer 1999, for photograph of Angel and Imp from said production.) Arlyn was responsible for the design and creation of figures and sets, as well as having a separate interest in fabric and jewellery design and the creation of three-dimensional miniatures. A trust is being established in Arlyn's memory to fund an international annual award for outstanding puppet design. This is being administered for the time being by The North Shore Arts Commission, 148 East Second Street, North Vancouver, Canada, to which donations may be sent.

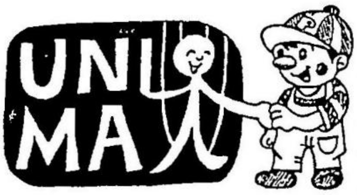


Professor John Varey (1922-1999)
John Varey, who died 28 March, will perhaps be better known to Spanish puppeteers and theatre researchers than their British counterparts. His substantial and pioneering research into the history of Spanish puppet theatre is remarkable in its sheer volume and incredible attention to detail. Varey studied Modern Languages at Cambridge University and went on to complete a doctorate (1955) entitled *Historia de los títeres en España* (History of Spanish Puppet Theatre). In his thesis (sadly, only in Spanish), Varey traces the development of Spanish puppetry from the earliest documented information in 1116 through to 1758. His sources are extensive and varied and represent many long hours of searching through archival material ranging from newspaper articles to payment notes. The thesis discusses the rise of puppetry from religious spectacles to the swazzled and scurrilous Don Cristóbal Polichinela; it also encompasses the puppetry repertoire and mentions of puppetry in Spanish literature. It is a remarkable work and has been the first port of call for any researchers of Spanish puppet theatre. Varey went on to write two further works (also only available in Spanish) which illuminate the variety of puppet theatre in Spain, including *Títeres y otras diversiones populares en Madrid* (Puppets and Other Popular Entertainments in Madrid). Puppetry remained a fascination for Varey all his life, and he considered puppet theatre to be an equal partner with actors' theatre – a rarity in his time.

Cariad Astles

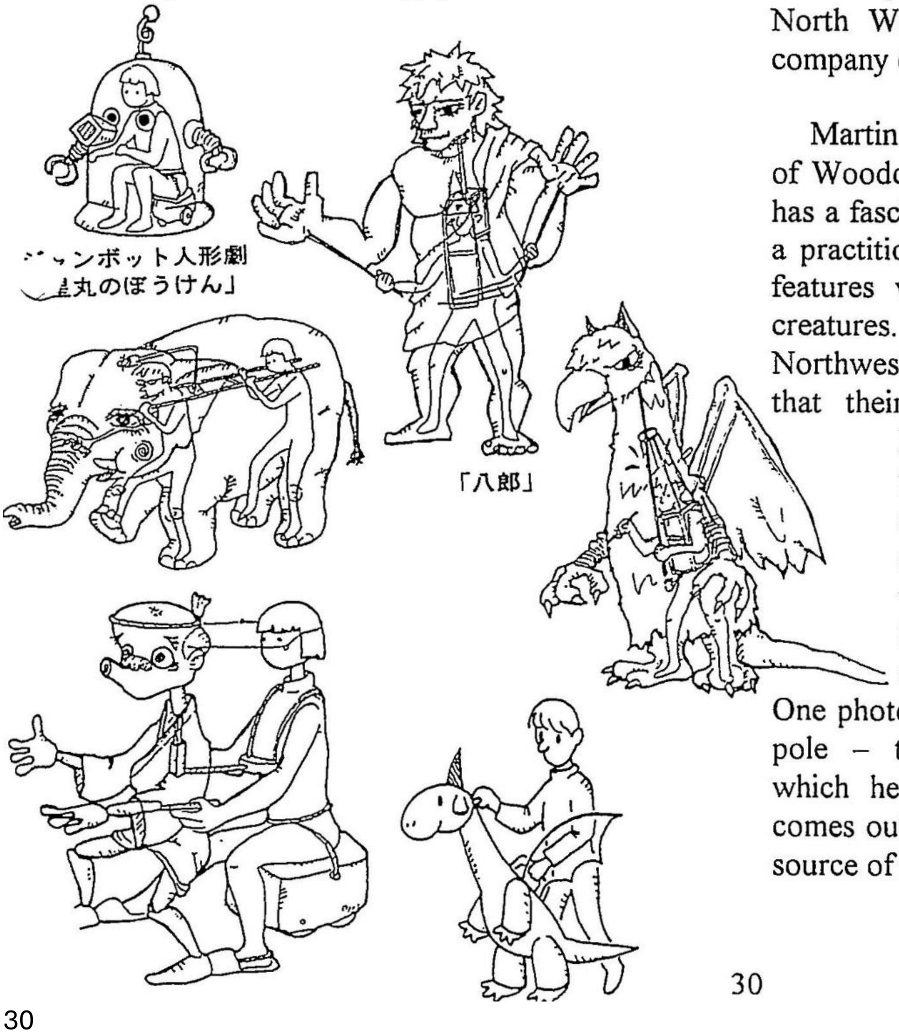
See also obituaries in *The Independent*, 1 4 99; *The Daily Telegraph*, 13 4 99; and *The Guardian*, 4 5 99.

Christine Glanville (1924-1999)
In addition to the numerous tributes in the puppetry press to Christine Glanville, best known as one of Gerry Anderson's chief puppeteers and puppet-makers, obituaries were also published, inter alia, in *The Independent*, 3 4 99, and *The Guardian*, 26 4 99.



"Puk's mascot boy – "PUKICHI" and UNIMA's logo shake hands with each other. Thanks for FRIENDSHIP"

Congratulations to Puppet Theatre PUK on their 70th anniversary – founded in the same year as UNIMA by Toji Kawajiri. During its early years, puppeteers in Japan were persecuted by the police (what were they afraid of?), and it was not until 1946, when the bans on puppetry were lifted, that the company came into its own under the leadership of Taiji Kawajiri (brother of the founder). Since then, they have been at the forefront of Japanese puppet theatre, developing new ideas whilst preserving indigenous ones. In addition to their own work, which has taken them throughout Japan, they have had a full programme of visiting companies to their theatre from overseas. (Coad Canada Puppets have played there several times). Below are some illustrations from the company's anniversary brochure. If you want to see what a Japanese website looks like try: http://www.mesh.ne.jp/puk/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丸のぼうけん」
「八郎」

Charleville

The Institut Internationale de la Marionnette will be running the following summer courses: shadow theatre under the direction of Teatro Gioco Vita, 25 July-7 August (languages Italian/French); Bunraku under the direction of Master Yoshida Minotaro, 9-22 August (language English); and "Dramaturgy and Street Theatre" directed by Dominique Houdart, 25 August-11 September. Details from the Institut, 7 place Winston Churchill, 08000 Charleville-Mézières, France; tel 03 24 33 72 50/fax 03 24 33 72 69; institut@marionnette.com; http://www.marionnette.com

Carving

The well-known puppet-maker Stephen Sharples will be running a five-day course in puppet carving for beginners or professionals 13-17 September. The fee for the course, limited to six people, is £160; all materials and tools are provided. The location is The Treasure Trove Puppet Company's workshop in the village of Llanarmon-y-ial, North Wales. For details, telephone the company on 01352 750838.

Martin MacGilp writes: "The latest issue of Woodcarving magazine (May/June 1999) has a fascinating article by Robert Davidson, a practitioner of the Haida art form, which features various animals and mythological creatures. The Haida people lived in the Northwest of Canada, but it would appear that their art tradition almost died out. Robert Davidson learned the traditional carving from his father and grandfather and then extended and pushed forward his own version of the art form. The article includes photographs of several superb totem poles and masks. One photograph is of Davidson's first totem pole – the 40-foot-high 'Bear Mother,' which he carved in 1969. Woodcarving comes out six times a year and is a constant source of inspiration."

Shock Headline

Rerun at Lyric Hammersmith of "Shockheaded Peter," junk opera with live animation and big hair, *closes 10 July*.

Not So Rude Mechanicals

The Newport Museum and Art Gallery is staging "Devious Devices," an exhibition of contemporary automata selected by Terry Gilliam, until *only* 17 July. Tel: 01633 840064.

Follow-Ups

I mentioned in the last *Bulletin* that there are several CDs of Benjamin Britten playing Colin McPhee's gamelan transcriptions. I have just across *the roots of gamelan*, issued (1999) by World Arbiter, which includes, in addition to the aforementioned piano duo, historic recordings of Balinese gamelan made in 1928, representing new and older styles at that crucial time in the island's musical history. They were the first and only commercially released recordings of Balinese music prior to World War II. For those wanting to explore further, Mervyn Cooke's *Britten and the Far East: Asian Influences on the Music of Benjamin Britten* (published last year) ranges across the territory of his borrowings from Japanese, Balinese, and Indian traditions.

John Furse made mention of Stefan Themerson's friendship with Kurt Schwitters. The latter's *Kurt Schwitters on a Timechart*, a personal essay in which he places Schwitters's pioneering work in a wider context of culture and history by way of a graphic collage of facts, ideas, and images, has just been brought out by the bibliophile Dutch Huis Clos Press in facsimile (only 425 copies), with a Dutch translation. Huis Clos Publishers, p/a Korteweegje 20, 3244 AL Nieuwe Tonge, the Netherlands; make your sterling cheque out for £14, including p&p, to the Themerson Archive.

Corrections and Clarifications

John Morley's article on Mester Jakel: (p 11) read "Jørgen" sted "Jorgen". To bring you up to date on the author, he completed his MA studies in Arabic (*not* Arabic and Spanish) in October 1998 and is now lecturing in Arabic Translation at the University of Westminster.

Thanks

In addition to heartfelt thanks to George Speaight, John Blundall, Tjahjono Rahardjo, and Peter Peasgood for main articles, we should also like to express our appreciation to Cariad Astles, John Furse, Penny Francis, Martin MacGilp. and Ryan Howard for information supplied.

Housekeeping

The deadline for the next *Bulletin* is **1 October**; for the *Newsletter* **1 August**.

Flat-Earthers

What with Charlotte Raven's think-piece on Flat Eric under the headline "How a furry yellow muppet restored my faith in culture" (*The Guardian*, 9 3 99), and the techno-loving Levi star's chart success (number one two weeks running with half-a-million copies shifted by the beginning of April, which, admittedly, says volumes about the competition), one might well be justified in believing that – temporarily at least – one was inhabiting a parallel universe.

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